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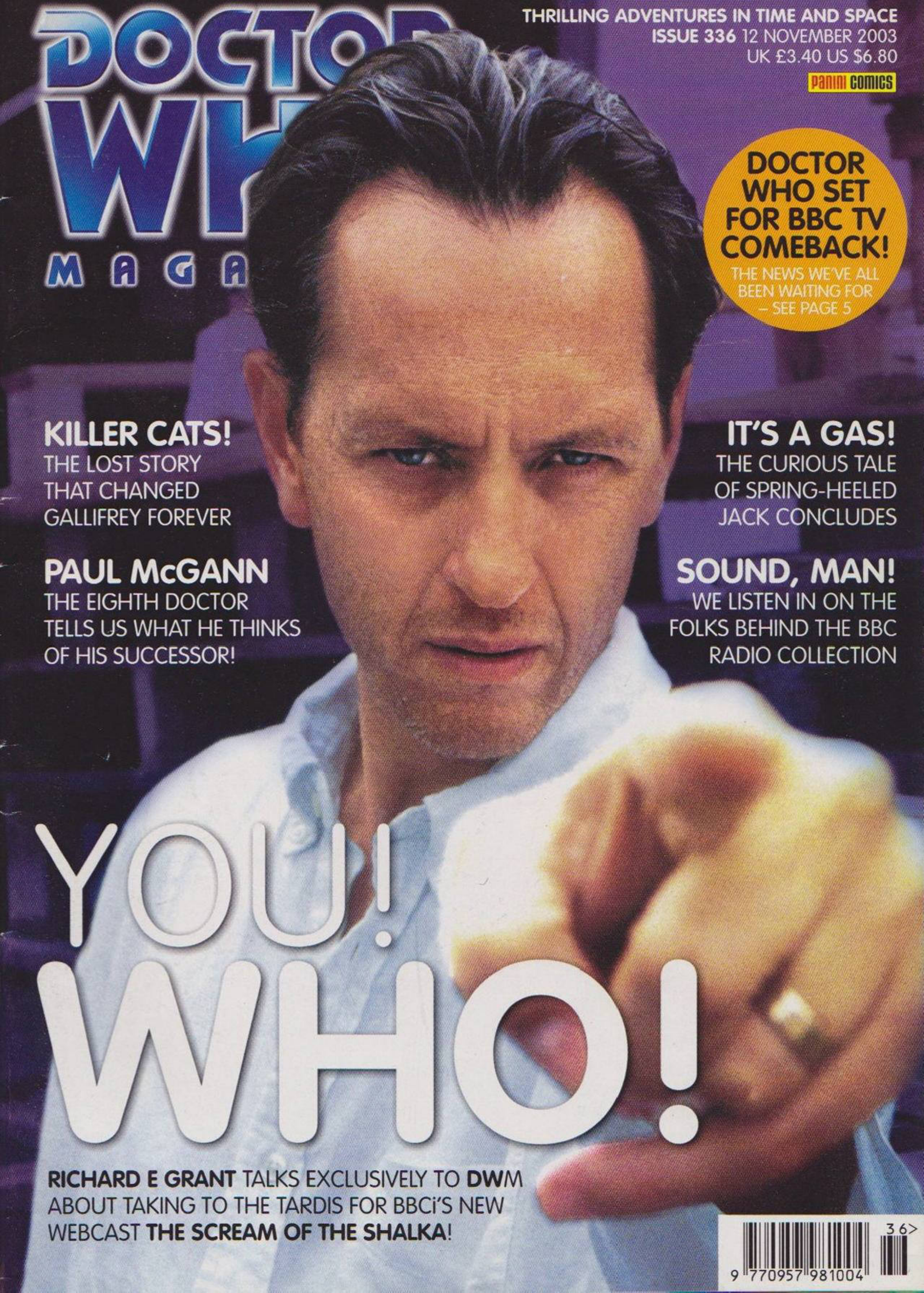
PANINI COMICS



DOCTOR WHO SET FOR BBC TV COMEBACK!
THE NEWS WE'VE ALL BEEN WAITING FOR – SEE PAGE 5

KILLER CATS!
THE LOST STORY THAT CHANGED GALLIFREY FOREVER

PAUL McGANN
THE EIGHTH DOCTOR TELLS US WHAT HE THINKS OF HIS SUCCESSOR!

IT'S A GAS!
THE CURIOUS TALE OF SPRING-HEELED JACK CONCLUDES

SOUND, MAN!
WE LISTEN IN ON THE FOLKS BEHIND THE BBC RADIO COLLECTION

YOU! WHO!

RICHARD E GRANT TALKS EXCLUSIVELY TO **DW**M ABOUT TAKING TO THE TARDIS FOR BBCi'S NEW WEBCAST **THE SCREAM OF THE SHALKA**!

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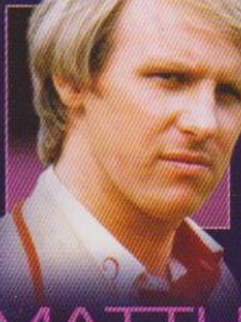

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Please note that Martin Jarvis' appearance is subject to final confirmation

NEW IN PRINT

Faction Paradox

FACTION PARADOX COMIC: ISSUE 1 The first in a new series, featuring the shady cult from the BBC novels. Author LAWRENCE MILES and cover artist STEVE JOHNSON will be in the store signing copies on October 25. £2.25 plus £1.00 postage

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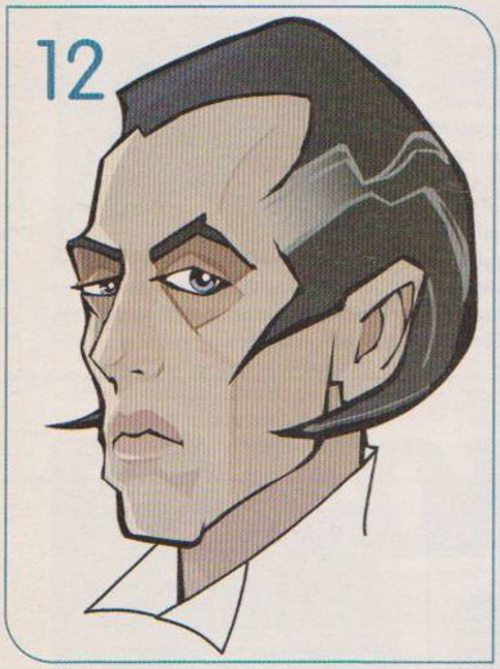
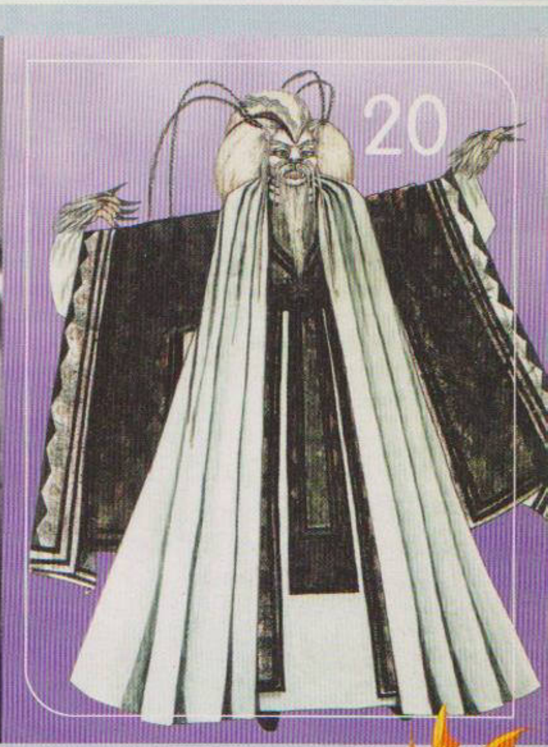
DWM 336

"A MAGAZINE? ABOUT DOCTOR WHO?!"





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Of all of this year's new Doctors, **Richard E Grant**'s incarnation is perhaps the most eagerly-awaited of all. **DW**M sent Benjamin Cook along to try to get a few words with the stars of BBCi's **The Scream of the Shalka**. But things didn't go quite as planned ...

20 CAT FLAP!
Daniel O'Mahony continues his investigation into the bullets **Doctor Who** dodged during its 26-year run on television with a look at killer cats and robot dogs ...

28 RADIO WALL OF SOUND
They've been bringing unearthly sounds into living rooms since the 1979 LP release of **Genesis of the Daleks**. So what's next for the **BBC Radio Collection**? **DW**M speaks to Michael Stevens and Mark Ayres to find out ...

34 ALTERN-EIGHT FUTURE?
With his old drinking buddy cast as BBCi's new Doctor for November's webcast, is **Paul McGann** content to be labelled a 'past' Doctor? Not a bit of it! "Watch this space!" he tells **DW**M ...

37 RETURN OF THE JACK
With the Pyrodines unleashed, are the Doctor and Penny helpless to stop them? Find out as **The Curious Tale of Spring-Heeled Jack** concludes!

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DOCTOR WHO
1963-2003

COMING UP...
MASTER

AFTER EIGHT?

"I think Richard E Grant should be the new Dr Who. He's never even heard of the Monsters."

GALLIFREY GUARDIAN

OTHER NEWS

ZAGREUS CAST

Big Finish's 40th anniversary special *Zagreus* has had a few late additions to its cast. As well as the names published last issue, former TV companions Elisabeth Sladen (Sarah Jane) and Anneke Wills (Polly) have recorded guest spots, although, like everyone else appearing, they are not necessarily playing their familiar roles. Occasional Big Finish guest star Stephen Perring (most prominent as Sebastian Grayle in *Seasons of Fear*) also features.

FIND CATHAY!

The forthcoming triple CD release of *Marco Polo* will come with something a little bit special, according to the BBC Radio Collection's Michael Stevens. He told **DW**M: "As this is a rather special release for us – the earliest story we've done so far, and a real classic which works fabulously on audio – we're throwing in a full-colour pull-out map detailing the TARDIS crew's journey with Polo, from the Roof of the World to Cathay. It's a gorgeous piece of artwork, designed by Dean Rose, Derek Handley and Rick Brindell. Also, this release will be a little like *The Daleks' Master Plan* in that CD 1 is an enhanced disc, carrying MP3 files of the remastered episodes *sans* narration, along with a text file of the narrative script and a jpeg of the map." *Marco Polo* is set for release on November 3.

TIMELY AWARD!

The BBC Radio Collection CD release of *Death Comes to Time* has won the Gold Award for Best Drama at this year's Spoken Word Publishing Association Awards on 18 September. Producer Dan Freedman, actor John Sessions and sound engineer Jon Taylor were present at the ceremony to collect the award – one of eight Gold Awards won by BBC Audiobooks on the night.

CONVENTION NEWS

The Gladstone Hotel in Liverpool plays host to *Dr Who and the Daleks* on March 6-7 2004, a follow-up to the 2000 convention *Day of the Daleks*. Tickets cost £36 for one day, and £59 for both. Details are available from Indelible Promotions (G), PO Box 6777, Northampton, NN2 8ZD or at *www.indelible.org.uk/drwho*

EXCLUSIVE: 'THE STORY OF DOCTOR WHO' ON COURSE FOR DECEMBER …

A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR WHO!

Following our news story that a BBC1 documentary on *Doctor Who* is in development [see **DW**M 334], we can now reveal further details about the project. The show is to be titled *The Story of Doctor Who* and made by the Factual Entertainment Department, as the second in an occasional strand following last year's *The Story of Only Fools and Horses*.

"It will be a warm tribute to a television legend," the producer told us. "It will be an hour long, and broadcast on BBC1 at some point over the Christmas holiday period – subject to the whims of the schedulers! We want this to be a family show, which can be enjoyed by the dedicated *Doctor Who* fan and casual viewer alike. It will tell the story of *Doctor Who* through the words of those who were involved with its production – the programme will be interview-led, so there will be no linking narration. And, of course, there will be many clips from all eras of the show." Kevin Davies [pictured], the man behind the much-loved 1993 documentary *30 Years in the TARDIS*, is acting as consultant to the project.

DWM has been asked to politely request that readers should not telephone the BBC asking for more details on the documentary at this time, as the team are exceptionally busy preparing the programme to a tight deadline, and don't have time to deal with enquiries.

DWM will, of course, be keeping you fully up-to-date with news on this exciting production over the next couple of months.

TARDIS LEAVES LONGLEAT …

The *Doctor Who* exhibition at Longleat House, Wiltshire, is to close, permanently, on 2 November. The exhibition, which opened in 1973, is a fondly-remembered part of many fans' childhoods, and was an integral part of *Doctor Who*'s 20th anniversary celebrations in 1983. The decision to close the exhibition has come internally from Longleat and has nothing to do with any section of the BBC. **DW**M has learned that a petition has been organised to keep the exhibition open – should any readers wish to voice their concerns, they are advised to send polite messages of protest to: TRW Moore, General Manager and Land Agent, The Estate Office, Longleat, Warminster, Wiltshire, BA12 7NW. **DW**M will be looking back over 30 years of the Longleat exhibition in a future issue.

RADIO TIME(S) LORD!

RadioTimes
80

The UK television listings magazine *Radio Times* is planning a selection of front covers devoted to *Doctor Who* for the week of 23 November, although at present it is not clear which of the Doctors will feature. It has become quite common for *Radio Times* to be available with multiple covers, a recent example being their Beatles/Rolling Stones edition. Additionally, an 40th anniversary souvenir feature is being readied for the same issue. Meanwhile, *Radio Times* has named *Doctor Who* as the programme most of its readers would like to see revived for television, in a poll celebrating the magazine's 80th birthday. The show gained 31% of the vote and beat *Blackadder* (22%) and *Fawlty Towers* (10%) into second and third places. Around 12,000 people took part, with *Doctor Who* proving hearteningly popular with voters under 20.

WIN PURE EVIL!

"You gotta have faith," sang George Michael, and it was a lesson well learned by Dr Who when he came under attack from the Haemovores in this month's DVD release, *The Curse of Fenric*. For a chance to own one of five copies, you must have a total belief that you will win, with no doubts or insecurities. Oh, and you need to answer this question correctly too:

Fenric was Evil since … what?
Is it [a] The Dawn of Time; [b] The Dawn Chorus; or [c] Dawn French?

Send your answer on a postcard or stuck-down envelope marked YOU IMPUDENT CHILD to the editorial address by 13/11/03.

GALLOPING GALLIFREY!

Big Finish's Gary Russell has revealed that the company will be launching a new spin-off audio range in 2004.

With the working title *Gallifrey*, the four-part, single CD mini-series will document the new adventures of President Romana and Leela, played again (fresh from appearing in *Zagreus*) by Lalla Ward and Louise Jameson.

Russell told **DW**M; "I've always loved the Doctor's home planet and feel that the actual society therein was never explored very deeply on TV. I've always wanted to find out how Gallifrey ticks. What do Time Lords actually *do* all day? How do they cope with a President with a more shady past than her predecessors, with a friend like Leela – an off-worlder with a very different cultural heritage? With no Doctor around, we might learn a few secrets only hinted of before.

"It's currently at the planning stages, but the opening and closing episodes will be written by Alan Barnes, whilst story two will be by Steve Cole, and Justin Richards will write the third. Both Lalla and Louise are very excited by the idea, and hopefully a couple of other familiar voices may crop up from time to time, including John Leeson as the voice of a K9 or two!" More news as we get it.

www.mallarkey.com
[buy and sell your Dr Who and scifi collectables on mallarkey]

HE'S BACK!

In the dying seconds before this issue went to press, **DWM** learned the exciting news that a new television series of *Doctor Who* has been commissioned by BBC1!

The story broke in the *Daliy Telegraph* on Friday 26 September [see clipping, right], with BBC1 Controller Lorraine Heggessey explaining how she has wanted to bring back the series for some time, but the proposed movie from BBC Films had prevented her from doing so sooner. "Worldwide has now agreed that, as they haven't made the film and I've been waiting for two years, it's only right that BBC1 should have a crack at making a series," she told the newspaper.

Guess who's coming back

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Award-winning television writer and producer Russell T Davies (known for *Queer as Folk*, *Bob and Rose*, *Dark Season*, *Century Falls* and *The Second Coming*) is the executive producer and writer of the new series – the first since Season Twenty-Six aired in the autumn of 1989. Davies, also author of the 1996 Virgin *New Adventure Damaged Goods* spoke exclusively to **DWM**:

"In September 2003, I was approached by Lorraine Heggessey, Controller of BBC1, and Jane Tranter, the BBC Controller of Drama, with an invitation to bring back *Doctor Who* for BBC1. At the moment, there's been no discussion about schedule or budget or Doctors or the number of episodes – I'm currently committed to a Red Production Company drama for ITV [*Mine All Mine*, ITV Spring 2004], and have to complete that before meetings can start.

"The current plan is to produce the series at BBC Wales, with myself, Julie Gardner, Head of Drama at BBC Wales, and Mal Young, BBC Controller of Drama Series, as Executive Producers. Although I've yet to work out the exact details of my committment, the BBC is absolutely dedicated to the programme's future. It looks like an exciting time ahead. And since I've been buying **Doctor Who Magazine** since its very first issue – I still have the transfers! – I'll be keeping the **DWM** team updated at every possible opportunity. Because I love them!"

Russell T Davies, **Doctor Who**'s new producer!

DWM understands that the series is likely to comprise eight or twelve 45-minute episodes, though no firm decision has yet been taken. The UK papers have, inevitably, started their usual round of unfounded casting speculations.

Needless to say, **DWM** will be following every aspect of the new series, and we will be keeping you fully up-to-date with all the developments as *Doctor Who* makes its long-awaited return to BBC1!

ADVERTISEMENT FEATURE

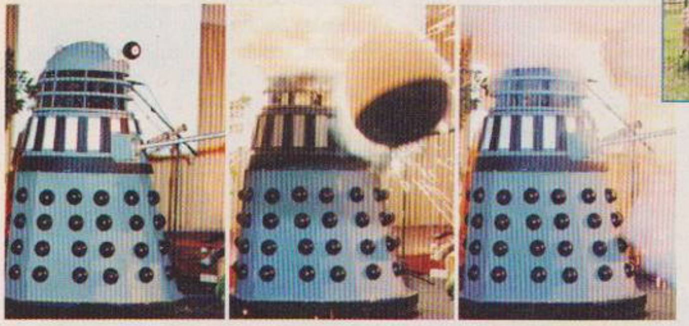
PANOPTICON

FORTY YEARS OF A TIME LORD

As November's mammoth 40th anniversary event approaches, **Gareth A Roberts** looks back over more than a quarter of a century of **PanoptiCon** conventions ...

PanoptiCon – not just a *Doctor Who* convention ... *the Doctor Who* convention!

It started 26 years ago in a Church Hall in Battersea and this year takes over the Hilton London Metropole in the West End. The guest list for that first event in 1977 boasted two Doctors, (Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker), one companion (Louise Jameson), and a number of production contributors. This year there will be between 40 and 60 guests. The first convention attracted around 200 attendees; this year we're expecting up to 1,500!



There is nothing like PanoptiCon. Featuring the genuine BBC TARDIS Police Box, a lavish reconstruction of the console room which includes the genuine console from *The Five Doctors*, programming broadcast from a sound and lighting rig suitable for a rock gig (compiled and run by stalwart members of the *Doctor Who* Restoration Team), a history of creating and premièring original productions (from *Downtime* to *The Few Doctors*), the attendance at various times of Patrick Troughton, Jon Pertwee, Tom Baker, Peter Davison, Colin Baker and Sylvester McCoy, activities ranging from interview panels before an audience of hundreds to seminars in intimate groups of a dozen, the first ever professional celebrity photo studio and now, for the first time, the **DWM** Awards.

No *Doctor Who* event in the world can lay claim to the heritage of PanoptiCon. Nor has any event matched it for innovation. The TARDIS has been air-lifted into the event by crane and Daleks have exploded on stage, all in the pursuit of celebrating one very special TV phenomenon. Few significant persons from the cast and crew of *Doctor Who* have failed to appear at some point. It was the first – it is the best.

But no previous PanoptiCon has attempted the sheer scale of PanoptiCon 2003. Over two days, fans will be introduced to guests from all eras of the show, as well as contributors to the new media into which *Doctor Who* has grown – BBC Books, **DWM**, Big Finish and, of course, the latest exciting developments from BBCi. This year the Saturday evening entertainment will include the inaugural **DWM** Awards, bolstered by comedy and music features, concluding in the early hours of Sunday morning.

PanoptiCon is now as much a celebration of the culture which has grown up around *Doctor Who* as of the show itself. And the word is spreading. Attendee applications processed so far show that many coming to this event haven't attended since PanoptiCon 1993, and many have never been to a convention at all. The determination to ensure a proper celebration of this 40th Anniversary is global – as might be expected, we have hordes of delegates flying in from the USA, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, but this year sees a massive influx from Continental Europe and countries as far afield as Finland and Israel!

As has been the case for more than 15 years now, Andrew Beech is at the helm. An attendee of that very first event in Battersea, Andrew has built what started as a very simple affair into a celebration which employs not just the enthusiasm of fans, but the skills of many professionals engaged in TV and the media. The net result – a band of volunteers who are professionals but who, for this event, become amateurs in the deepest and purest sense of the word – they do it for love.

There has never been anything like this year's PanoptiCon. Miss it, and you miss out on the *Doctor Who* event of the decade ...

PanoptiCon – Forty Years of a Time Lord, Hilton London Metropole, 1-2 November 2003. Find out more at www.dominitemporal.co.uk

EDITOR'S **LETTER**

This editorial is being written at the very last minute, scant Rels before the **DW**M presses start rolling. Normally I wouldn't alter one of my carefully crated missives for all the tea in Tunbridge Wells, but just this once I've elbowed out my 500 words on 'What sort of desk tidies do the **DW**M staff prefer?' in favour of a rather breathless announcement: DOCTOR WHO IS COMING BACK TO TELEVISION!

OK, so you've probably heard by now. Thanks to the internet, television and those funny things we call newspapers, **DW**M, the only periodical entirely devoted to *Doctor Who*, is probably the last to bring you the news we've been waiting 14 years for. But let me say it once again anyway, just to convince myself – DOCTOR WHO IS COMING BACK TO TELEVISION!

I remember, as a slip of a lad back in 1990, avidly scanning the TV news on Teletext daily for this announcement, little dreaming that more than a decade later I'd be, [a] the editor of this magazine, and [b] 'breaking' this news in its pages. Let me be the, er, last to congratulate regular **DW**M reader Russell T (it stands for *Terror of the Autons*) Davies, 40, of Swansea for getting the chance that every fan has dreamt of since ... well, November 23 1963, really. Okay, as of writing we don't know what form the new series will take, or when we'll see it, or who'll be in it, but let's face it – for the first time, we have *Doctor Who* in the hands of someone who knows how strongly we feel about the series, because *he feels it too*. And it's not exactly a drawback that he's got such impeccable writing credentials either!

"We hope you allow **DW**M to be your guide on this journey!"

It's suddenly struck me that (touch wood) I'm going to be the first **DW**M editor since John Freeman, back in 1989, to be at the helm of the mag when *Doctor Who* has been an ongoing TV series. It's exciting, obviously, but also a teensy bit terrifying. We'll have to resurrect *After Image* for one thing ...

At this point, I think it's appropriate to look back at the sterling work done by Messrs Russell, Gillatt and Barnes to keep **DW**M fresh and fascinating, and give a nod to all the folks at Virgin, BBC Books, Big Finish, BBCi and Telos whose hard graft has "kept us all together during the Healing time" as it were. Not that their work is over now – far from it in fact.

So, if you haven't done so already, flip back a page and have another look at Russell's message, then pinch youselves, throw buckets of water down your trousers and read it again. Nope, this isn't a dream – DOCTOR WHO IS COMING BACK TO TELEVISION! And we hope you'll allow **DW**M to be your guide on this incredibly, *unbelievably* exciting journey into the unknown. The adventure starts here ...

Bloody ecstatic times and places,

Clay

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E-mail: dwm@panini.co.uk
(marked 'DWMail' in the subject line)

DWMAIL

So, did you enjoy our *Blue Peter* issue, then? Well, we were overjoyed with the response, and very pleased to hear from one person in particular ...

WHERE AM I NOW?

Bleary-eyed I wander downstairs in the morning. Ah good! The latest edition of **DW**M is on the doormat – I have faithfully subscribed for years. Turn a few pages ... a *Blue Peter* special ... I used to like *Blue Peter*, in fact ... ohmygod it's *me*! There, on page 18 with Simon Groom! (Thanks for pointing out the moustache cultivation – it withered and died very quickly!)

All those years ago my mum contacted the *Blue Peter* office to tell them about my particular construction skills and a researcher soon appeared on our doorstep, followed by a BBC truck to collect the prize Dalek specimen. I share The Watcher's nostalgic crossover memories about *Blue Peter* and *Doctor Who*, so it was a bit of a dream come true to be live on the show. Simon did stretch a point when he said my Dalek was made from household rubbish, but it was indeed built mainly out of cardboard.

I remember that John Scott-Martin was on hand during rehearsals to sit with me and train me to talk correctly for a ring modulator – using plastic cups to emulate the tinny sound. Lovely chap. Legendary editor Biddy Baxter must have taken a shine to me because she invited me back a week later to view a recording of the show with her before it was consigned to the BBC archives (for you to unearth all these years later). I am 'A Friend of *Blue Peter*' – it's official cos Ms Baxter herself told me!

Unfortunately the Dalek moved away from home many years ago. Oh, okay, I sold it to some saddo Dalek nut like me. But the good/scary (delete as applicable) news is that, 24 years on, I'm finding time in-between my busy graphic design career – watch out Clayton! – to start on a new Dalek build, not in cardboard this time. I recently joined the Dalek Builders Guild online no less!

So, thanks **DW**M for dredging up some nice old memories.

RICHARD BERELSON CAMBERWELL

If I'm honest, I wasn't looking forward to **DW**M 334. A 26-page lead feature on *Blue Peter*? Surely there wasn't that much to say? How wrong I was! This was an entertaining, informative article, which was never boring.

I'm ashamed to say that, although I loved *Doctor Who* growing up, I was a *Children's ITV* kid. While I never missed the BBC's *Swap Shop* or *Saturday Superstore* in the hope that the current Doctor (or at least Matt Irvine) might be coming on as a guest, I invariably skipped *Blue Peter* in favour of *Blockbusters*. Now I can see what I've been missing and it makes me weep for my misspent youth!

MIKE LORD WANTAGE

I have to be honest – when I saw you advertising the next issue as a *Blue Peter* special the first thought that went through my head was 'space-filler'. But I was quite, quite wrong.

As a child of the 1970s, this *Blue Peter* extravaganza was spot on, and once again you've managed to make me laugh out loud. Andrew Pixley's mammoth feature expertly avoids becoming dull and uninvolving by adopting just the right amused (but never insulting) tone – so that even the factual errors and mistakes that used to irritate me have been given an air of enchantment all their own.

I also enjoyed the Watcher's own individual take on matters. What can I say except **DWM** has been entertaining me month after month this year, and this month is definitely the highlight so far. Many thanks for another superb issue.

ANDREW CURNOW DEVON

This is the first time I have ever written to **DWM**, and I am writing with a bit of a confession. Earlier this year, when I was off work with the flu, I took the time to write to *Blue Peter* to suggest some ways they could feature *Doctor Who*'s 40th birthday.

I say this is a confession as I am no longer of the age when one normally writes to *Blue Peter* (I'm 27!). Anyway, knock me down with a feather when a week later I got a reply from *Blue Peter* saying that they were already in the early stages of a celebratory item, and they didn't care how old I was as they were always pleased to receive letters from any viewer! I think this goes to show what a special programme *Blue Peter* is, and I am one fan who is very grateful for the support is has always offered *Doctor Who*.

I thought your *Blue Peter* issue was great, and when I saw it in WH Smith I thought I'd gone to heaven! My two favourite shows in one magazine! You all deserve *Blue Peter* badges!

STEVEN PURTON BERKHAMPSTED

I have been a long time reader of your fine magazine, since around 1982 and you have had many fine interviews, articles, *Archives*, etc over the years. However, a good idea as it was, I felt the *Blue Peter* issue was a little bit of overkill; like I say, nice idea but a bit too much for one issue. Perhaps it could have been spread over several?

BARRY STAVERS VIA E-MAIL

For anyone who didn't like our *Blue Peter* special, next issue we'll be showing you how to turn it into an attractive set of coasters – an ideal gift for aunties or uncles ...

PENNY FOR YOUR THOUGHTS

I have been enjoying your current comic strip *The Curious Tale of Spring-Heeled Jack*. I've a sneaky feeling that the Doctor will be gaining a new companion shortly when he says "You really could do with some company, Doctor ..." Will that companion be Penny Chapman?

GARY WATSON CRAMLINGTON

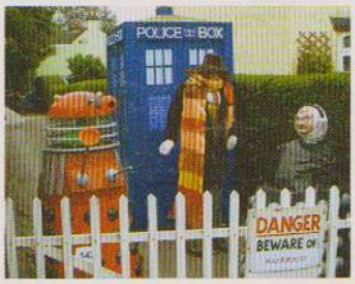
Quick! Turn to page 37 to find out!

STRIP AS NATURE INTENDED

I've just heard about the forthcoming collections of **DWM** strips from Panini. I've been hoping this would happen for many, many years. Kudos for not colouring them by the way – many readers may feel that coloured strips would be a bonus, but let me draw a parallel between coloured strips and coloured 1960s TV episodes. Original black and white is still the best!

BRAX VIA E-MAIL

A BUNCH OF WORZELS



I saw this at the Witherleig Village Scarecrow Weekend and thought you and your readers may be interested.

P BATEMAN VIA E-MAIL

Oo-arr, that we be.

TIME TO LET GO?

This might be a particularly radical idea, but I think *Doctor Who* needs a rest. Really! I think we should all stop talking, thinking, writing, watching, listening, and anything else we might do in relation to it. *Doctor Who* looks tired. The novels are tired. The UK Gold repeats are tired. The audios sound tired. *Doctor Who* is in danger of being consumed by the very people who've kept its flame burning since 1989.

Yes, I'm talking about the fans. The same names keep turning up on BBC books, the same people are writing the Big Finish audios, the same people are interviewing each other in **DWM**. The fans have been producing *Doctor Who* for longer than John Nathan-Turner did! I'd be the first person to applaud them for keeping the Doctor going, but I'm afraid those same people are now driving the show into a blind alley.

The final nail in the coffin was the 'announcement' that the Doctor would be returning in November. I hoped that some new independent producer would be getting their hands on it, a company that could recreate *Doctor Who* for a new generation. It needs to be back in the hands of TV professionals who can look on the concept with fresh eyes and ears. Instead, we get a webcast written by the same old sort of fan author who keeps plugging away at the past. Well how about trying something new? If the Doctor is ever going to return – *really* return, not just on a CD or a webcast – then as fans, we have to let go. We're all too close, we all love it too much.

MARK CHRISTOPHER VIA E-MAIL

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Red Remote Control Dalek £65.99
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COMING **UP...**

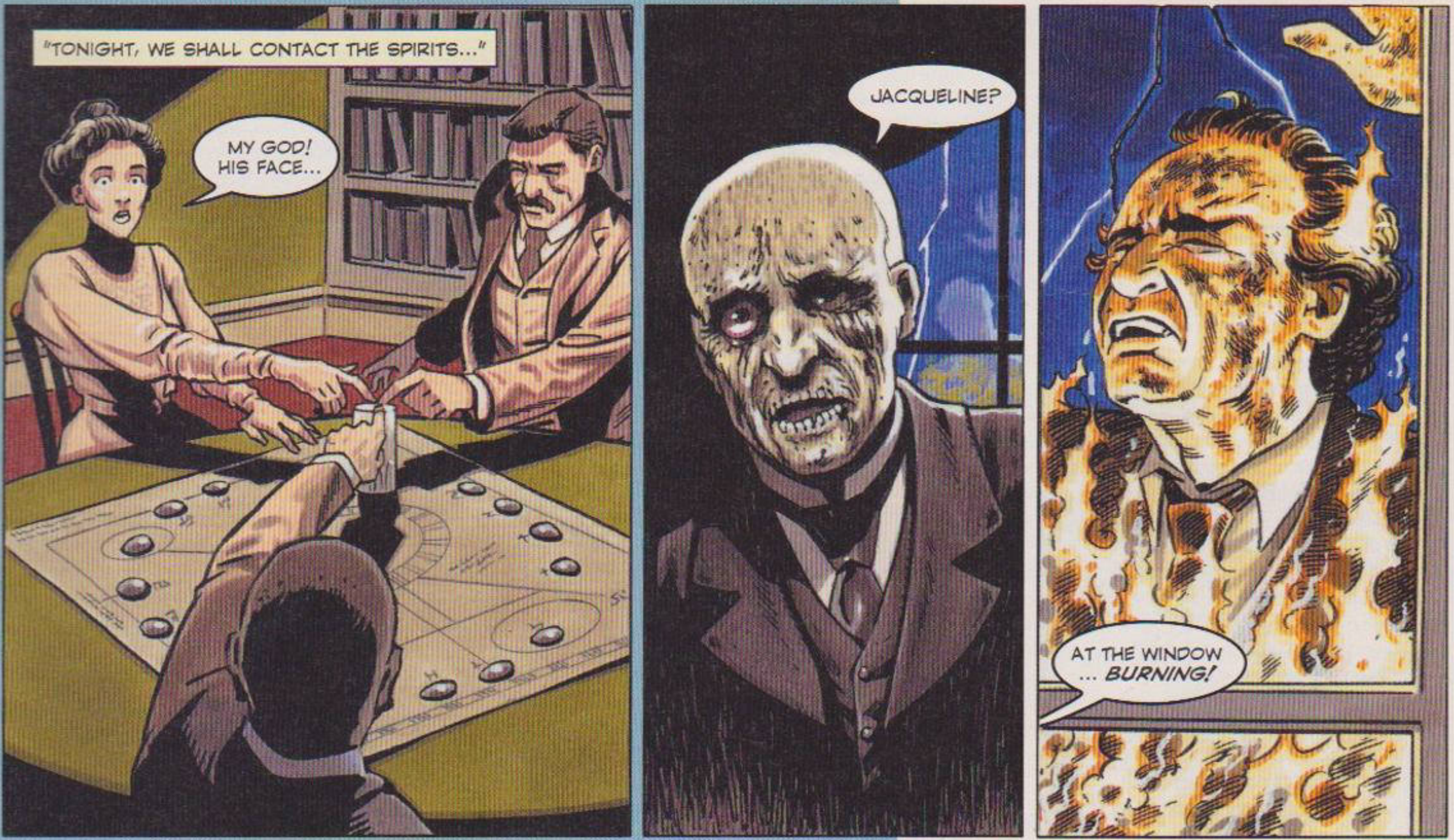

"TONIGHT, WE SHALL CONTACT THE SPIRITS..."
MY GOD! HIS FACE...
JACQUELINE?
AT THE WINDOW ... *BURNING!*

ILLUSTRATION BY **MARTIN GERAGHTY**

MASTER

AN AUDIO DRAMA BY **JOSEPH LIDSTER** PREVIEW BY **IAN FARRINGTON**

Sylvester McCoy in
DOCTOR WHO
Master
with Philip Madoc, Anne Ridler
and Geoffrey Beevers as The Master

RELEASED OCTOBER 2003
Featuring The Seventh Doctor
Enemies Inner demons ...
Setting A house in Perfugium
You'll like this if you like ... *Dust Breeding*, serial killers, Victoriana, Radio 4 dramas
Listen out for An explanation of something that happened a long time ago
Recorded 30-31 July 2003

The Doctor Sylvester McCoy
The Master Geoffrey Beevers
Victor Schaeffer Philip Madoc
Jacqueline Schaeffer Anne Ridler
Man Daniel Barzotti
Jade Charlie Hayes
Child Joe Bassett

Sound Design David Darlington
Director Gary Russell

Dr John Smith has lived in Perfugium for exactly ten years. With no memory of his life before his time as the local doctor, he invites his two closest friends to a dinner party to celebrate his tenth 'birthday'.

The arrival of a mysterious stranger turns their world upside down, and for all the occupants of the house, life will never be the same again ...

Master is the second audio drama from Joseph Lidster. "Gary Russell called me," he explains during a break in recording. "He was looking for someone to write a Seventh Doctor play featuring the Master and asked would I be interested in pitching an idea? Of course, I said yes."

The original impetus for the third story in Big Finish's loose trilogy of 'villains' stories had come from writer Cavan Scott, who pitched an idea featuring the Master suffering from amnesia. When Scott and his writing partner Mark Wright passed on *Master* in favour of doing *The Church and The Crown*, Russell contacted Lidster, whose first play, the Seventh Doctor story *The Rapture*, had just been recorded.

"I was told it was to have no companion and was to be called simply *Master*," says Lidster. "Gary wanted something character-based which is the kind of thing I like to write. He then said that someone – and he wouldn't say who – had already developed an idea which he summarised to me as 'the Doctor arrives on an alien planet where an apparently-amnesiac Master is working as a doctor'. So other than all that, I was given free reign. I went away and developed an idea."

Master isn't Lidster's first brush with Sylvester McCoy's Doctor – "I love writing for the Seventh Doctor" – and neither is it his first with the Master. The misguided Time Lord was, at one stage, going to be in *The Rapture*, wasn't he?

"Yeah, he was!" laughs Lidster. "I think I was about half-way through writing it, when Gary e-mailed me to ask if there was any possibility that I could write the Master into it. He explained how *Dust Breeding* and especially Geoffrey Beevers' Master had gone down really well with the fans.

Ian Farrington

"THIS IS SYLV'S BEST PERFORMANCE YET. HE'S JUST SO BLOODY GOOD!"

Joseph Lidster heaps praise on Sylvester McCoy

The problem was that *The Rapture* was very character-led. I'd done quite bit of work on developing the relationships and themes and the parallels between the various characters. Simply replacing one of them with the Master wouldn't have worked. Gary agreed, which, to be honest, was a big relief."

How did Lidster approach his second audio drama? "I decided that I wanted to write something very different to *The Rapture*. That had hundreds of very short scenes; *Master* has very few long scenes. *The Rapture* had a younger cast so *Master* would have an older cast. *Rapture* was big and loud so *Master* became small and quiet."

For research, the writer read up on serial killers, especially Jeffrey Dahlmer. "The press often describes murderers, rapists and paedophiles as 'monsters'. But they're not. They're as human as you or me. And how terrifying must it be to have these urges, these instincts but to not be able to control them?" The script was rewritten from scratch at one point ("I'd written the entire first draft but there was so much stuff that wasn't working") and an extra scene was written at Geoffrey Beevers' request. "He wanted a scene added towards the end ..." is all Lidster will say, enigmatically.

"THE MASTER HAS FORGOTTEN HIS PAST AND SEEMS TO BE A NICE GUY"

Geoffrey Beevers reveals a new twist for his character in **Master**

Left-Right: Barzotti, Madoc, McCoy, Lidster, Ridler, Hayes and Beevers.

Lidster is talking to **DW**M during the first recording day for *Master*. "I'm having an amazing time," he says. "The weather's lovely and I'm not at work! The cast are all fantastic. They're all really interested in the script and 'getting it right'." The writer is more than pleased with the actors. "It's difficult to describe how great they all sound. I reckon this is Sylv's best performance yet. He's just so bloody good! Geoffrey is, of course, brilliant. Everyone goes on about what a wonderful voice he has, and he does, but that isn't all – he's an excellent actor as well. He has to do so much in *Master* and he just gets it right every time. Anne [Ridler] and Philip [Madoc] are also fantastic. They're giving some of the best performances I've ever heard. Charlie [Hayes] is just so sweet as Jade that I wish I'd given her more to do."

"Last time, it was a surprise that it was the Master," says Geoffrey Beevers, recalling *Dust Breeding*, the character's first audio adventure. "I could lurk there, ready to pounce! This time, the feeling was everybody would know I was going to be the Master – so the surprise was to make me a nice guy. You know it's him, but he's forgotten his past and appears to be a goodie. I like that, it's a nice twist." What reaction does he get from *Doctor Who* fans? "It's been very gratifying, it's been very nice. People have come up to me and said how much they enjoyed the first one. It's terrific fun playing the Master – it always is fun playing the evil parts." **DW**M suggests that he is now considered to be the 'current' Master. "That suits me," he says, with a very Master-ish chuckle.

"I enjoy the infinite variety of the way the stories are written," says Sylvester McCoy. "This one's a really intriguing one, very thoughtful." Does McCoy find it odd doing the audios without his television Master, Anthony Ainley? "No, not really. I can't see Geoffrey – he's in a different part of the studio – I just hear the voice and his voice is great as the Master." And how about about doing stories without a companion? "You don't necessarily need a companion, although I miss Sophie Aldred and I miss ..." A ringing telephone interrupts **DW**M's interview. "That's Bonnie [Langford] phoning up now to say that I miss her as well!"

"It's an integral character," says Philip Madoc, who's notching up another *Doctor Who* appearance. "My character represents somebody who has an attitude towards life which is 'the practical'. Things other than the practical or evidence, he's not akin to too closely." How does *Master* compare to Madoc's previous *Doctor Who* stories? "*The War Games* [1969] was very thoughtful and a good idea. My character, the War Lord, was called Lord of the Universe or something. I can't go much further than that!" As well as two Patrick Troughton serials – Madoc also appeared in 1968/69's *The Krotons* – the actor appeared with Tom Baker ("dominant and unique" says Madoc) in 1976's *The Brain of Morbius* and 1978/79's *The Power of Kroll* as well as the second Dalek movie in 1966. "*Brain of Morbius* seems to me, from the reaction of people, to be the most popular thing I've done in the *Doctor Who* framework. The character was good – a Frankenstein-prototype really. The lines were good, the drama was good. I remember it with affection."

"I do have to say that I think it's awfully well written," says Anne Ridler, who plays Madoc's on-audio wife, Jacqueline. *Master* is not Ridler's first appearance in *Doctor Who*, having been in *The Wheel in Space* in 1968. **DW**M asks her about that story. "It was ages ago, with Patrick Troughton, who was an absolute darling," she laughs, before recounting an incident from the recording. "On one of the camera days, I had to rush off the set. I ran and pulled up sharply and said, 'Oh, I've got a funny pain in my bum!' The next morning I couldn't walk. I'd trapped my sciatic nerve all down my leg – blindingly painful. I was drugged to the eyeballs on that show on painkillers, and thought, 'My golly, when I see this, there's bound to be a dreadful difference [to the previous episodes]. There wasn't a tiny bit of difference! Which is a bit worrying!"

Ridler's appearance in 1968 had been alongside Wendy Padbury, whose daughter, Charlie Hayes, also stars in *Master*. "I grew up with *Doctor Who* because of my mum being in it," says Hayes. What are people's reactions when they discover who her mother is? "If you're doing an acting job with someone and spending weeks working with someone, finally you get on to the subject of your families and they find out that your mum was Wendy Padbury. Occasionally, people who are really in to *Doctor Who* and sci-fi, blush and giggle a lot, and say, 'I really fancy your mum!' Then it gets a bit embarrassing." Big Finish has been a bit of a family affair of late: Padbury was in last month's *Davros*, whilst Hayes's father, Melvyn Hayes, is in the recently-webcast and soon-to-be-out-on-CD *Shada*.

So having now written two *Doctor Who* audio plays, does Lidster feel like an established writer? "I don't know about that," he smiles. "I feel more comfortable telling people that I'm a writer now that I've done a second audio and a couple of short stories. I've also been to a convention and done an autograph signing – which my mates think is hilarious – so, yes, I feel part of it now."

Master has not been Geoffrey Beevers' only connection with *Doctor Who* lately. He recently filmed an episode of *Agatha Christie's Poirot* – a production which co-starred one Paul McGann. "We were doing a shot with Paul McGann in the foreground and me in the background, looking over his shoulder," laughs Beevers. "I thought, '*Doctor Who* fans will love this. He's Doctor Who and I am the Master!'"

TIME-PATH INDICATOR

NOVEMBER

SATURDAY 1

TV ***Doctor Who: Terminus*** UK Gold

TV ***Doctor Who: Inferno*** UK Gold

SUNDAY 2

TV ***Doctor Who: Enlightenment*** UK Gold

MONDAY 3

CD ***Doctor Who: Marco Polo*** by John Lucarotti [First Doctor, etc] *BBC Radio Collection*

CD ***Doctor Who: Dalek CD Set (The Power of the Daleks and The Evil of the Daleks)*** by David Whitaker *BBC Radio Collection*

Novel ***Doctor Who: Deadly Reunion*** by Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks [Third Doctor, Jo and UNIT] *BBC Books*

MONDAY 3 - TUESDAY 4

TV ***Doctor Who: The Power of Kroll*** UK Gold

WEDNESDAY 5 - FRIDAY 7

TV ***Doctor Who: The Armageddon Factor*** UK Gold

THURSDAY 6

DWM Anniversary Special *Panini, £4.99*

SATURDAY 8

TV ***Doctor Who: The King's Demons*** UK Gold

TV ***Doctor Who: Inferno*** UK Gold

SUNDAY 9

TV ***Doctor Who: Warriors of the Deep*** UK Gold

MONDAY 10 - TUESDAY 11

TV ***Doctor Who: City of Death*** UK Gold

WEDNESDAY 12 - THURSDAY 13

TV ***Doctor Who: The Creature from the Pit*** UK Gold

THURSDAY 13

DWM Issue 337 on sale *Panini Comics £3.40*

FRIDAY 14 - MONDAY 17

TV ***Doctor Who: The Nightmare of Eden*** UK Gold

SATURDAY 15

TV ***Doctor Who: The Awakening*** UK Gold

TV ***Doctor Who: Terror of the Autons*** UK Gold

SUNDAY 16

TV ***Doctor Who: Frontios*** UK Gold

TUESDAY 18 - WEDNESDAY 19

TV ***Doctor Who: The Horns of Nimon*** UK Gold

THURSDAY 20 - FRIDAY 21

TV ***Doctor Who: The Leisure Hive*** UK Gold

SATURDAY 22 - SUNDAY 23

TV ***Doctor Who: Anniversary Weekend*** UK Gold

MONDAY 24

DVD ***Doctor Who: The Three Doctors*** by Bob Baker & Dave Martin [First, Second & Third Doctors, Jo, UNIT] *BBC Worldwide*

Video ***Doctor Who: The Reign of Terror*** by Dennis Spooner [First Doctor, etc] *BBC Video*

MONDAY 24 - TUESDAY 25

TV ***Doctor Who: Meglos*** UK Gold

WEDNESDAY 26 - THURSDAY 27

TV ***Doctor Who: Full Circle*** UK Gold

FRIDAY 28 - MONDAY 1 DECEMBER

TV ***Doctor Who: State of Decay*** UK Gold

SATURDAY 29

TV ***Doctor Who: Planet of Fire*** UK Gold

TV ***Doctor Who: Terror of the Autons*** UK Gold

SUNDAY 30

TV ***Doctor Who: The Twin Dilemma*** UK Gold

ALSO THIS MONTH

Audio Drama ***Doctor Who: Zagreus*** by Alan Barnes & Gary Russell [Fifth, Sixth, Seventh & Eighth Doctors] Big Finish

Audio Drama ***Doctor Who: The Wormery*** by Steve Cole, Paul Magrs [Sixth Doctor] Big Finish

Novella ***Doctor Who: Eye of the Tyger*** by Paul McAuley [Eighth Doctor] Telos £10/£25

Book ***Doctor Who: The Legend*** by Justin Richards BBC Books £40

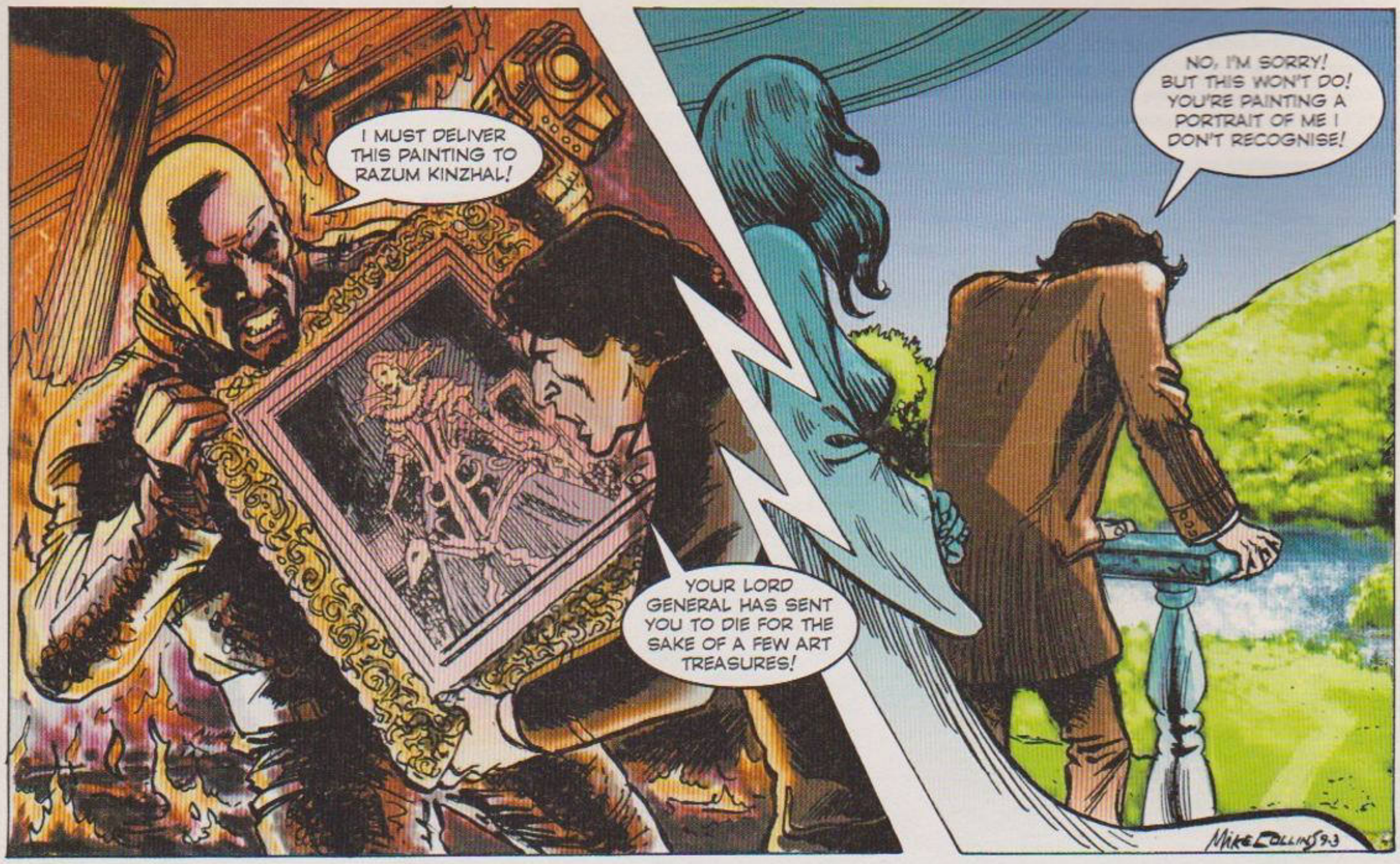
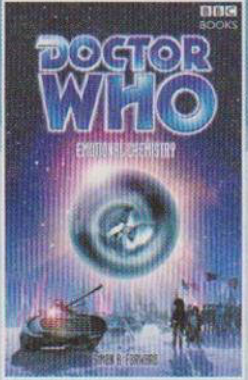

I MUST DELIVER THIS PAINTING TO RAZUM KINZHAL!
YOUR LORD GENERAL HAS SENT YOU TO DIE FOR THE SAKE OF A FEW ART TREASURES!
NO, I'M SORRY! BUT THIS WON'T DO! YOU'RE PAINTING A PORTRAIT OF ME I DON'T RECOGNISE!
MIKE COLLINS 9-3

ILLUSTRATION BY **MIKE COLLINS**

EMOTIONAL CHEMISTRY

A NOVEL BY **SIMON A FORWARD** PREVIEW BY **DAVID DARLINGTON**



PUBLISHED 6 OCTOBER
Featuring The Eighth Doctor, Fitz and Trix
Setting Russia, in the 19th, 21st and 51st centuries
Enemies Vladimir Garudin ...
You'll Like This If You Like ... *The Wages of Sin*
Say what? "Out of sight, out of mind ... thought Fitz, convinced he could still feel the heat of the flames on his face. He wondered if the Doctor, wherever he was, was still on fire."

A fourth full-length *Doctor Who* in two years from the franchise's most prolific recent arrival, *Emotional Chemistry* is described by range editor Justin Richards as "an epic love story across different time zones" – and by writer Simon Forward as "a story I've wanted to tell for years." Indeed, when I spoke to Forward on the occasion of the release of his novella *Shell Shock* a few months back, he could barely contain his enthusiasm for *Emotional Chemistry*. Is this a 'magnum opus', then? "I don't know about that," concedes Forward, "but I am excited about it – the end result is better than I could ever have expected way back when I first had the idea. For all of *Shell Shock*'s maturity, I have an ambiguous relationship with that novella. Where *Shell Shock* was a battle, *Emotional Chemistry* was more of a love affair ..."

Forward is among the first authors to develop new companion, Trix. "Initially, Trix was a challenge," Forward admits. "There was even less to build on than with Evelyn in [Big Finish audio] *The Sandman* – at least there I had a voice to work with. But I eventually got an angle on her as an actress, exploring her through the roles she plays, and she really came alive for me after that. Plus eventually I read *Timeless* and that helped firm up the characterisation." How does she compare to her illustrious predecessors? "Anji was more 'real', and I would have liked the chance to write for her. It was her 'normality' that ideally should have given her the greatest potential for change when it came to being put through the *Doctor Who* mill – but perhaps down to earth is where she belongs. Trix, by comparison, oozes potential in terms of what she can do, and I hope she continues for some time to be something of a loose cannon, livewire element – independence, unreliability, and unpredictability are what she brings to the mix. Fitz is almost part of the TARDIS furniture, and it's time someone came along to shift that furniture around a bit."

"I HAD TO EXERCISE MY MIND WHEN IT CAME TO 'FUTURISING' MOSCOW"

Simon A Forward on **Emotional Chemistry**'s Russian setting

Forward could almost be accused of making life difficult for himself here – the 'fictionalised Russia' setting, being neither purely historical nor purely alien, is thus 'neither one thing nor the other', and must have required a lot of developmental work ... "Funnily enough," admits Forward, "while I've never been to New Hampshire where *Drift* was set, I have been to Russia. So the Siberia and Moscow you're getting in *Emotional Chemistry* are inspired from memory, and I just had to exercise the imagination when it came to 'futurising' it all. It was a balance between historical research at the one end and establishing a sense of 'future history' at the other. Admittedly it's reliant on my memory, and I'm getting older these days, but at least the 'sense of Russia' does come from personal experience."

Forward's biography mentions that he has acquired 'new ambitions' ... that sounds ominously like the language of someone ready to move on ... "No, I'm far from done with *Doctor Who*," Forward insists. "I love it too much, and I have far too many ideas that are just made for *Doctor Who* really. I'm as hell-bent as ever on establishing my writing career outside of that, but I don't think I'll ever be done with *Doctor Who* – so roll on some more as soon as possible ..."

And as for where the range as a whole is headed in the near future, Justin Richards has some revealing thoughts to share ... "What first attracted me to *Emotional Chemistry*," he says, "was the epic sweep of it. I like the 'Russian Novel' approach – how that is used to convey the 19th century story, and how it is subverted and exploited to comment on the 51st century story. A sort of literary *plus ca change*, I suppose. The 'all for love' motivation is a refreshing change too – nobody wants to destroy the world, though they don't care if that happens as a side-effect. It's a motivation everyone can empathise with and which the Doctor finds difficult to denounce. Also it gives us a chance to take a breath and be free of most of the ongoing story before plunging headlong into the final book in the sequence, *Sometime Never* ..."

THE THREE DOCTORS

A DVD STARRING **JON PERTWEE** PREVIEW BY **DAVID DARLINGTON**

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
THE THREE DOCTORS
The JON PERTWEE Years 1970-74

RELEASED 24 NOVEMBER

Featuring The Third Doctor, Jo and UNIT, the First and Second Doctors

Enemies Omega

DVD Extras

- Free Corgi 40th anniversary model of 'Bessie'
- Audio Commentary by Nicholas Courtney, Katy Manning and producer Barry Letts
- 1973 *Pebble Mill* interviews with Bernard Wilkie and Patrick Troughton
- 1974 *Blue Peter* feature with Jon Pertwee and the Whomobile
- BSB 31 *Who* weekend interviews with Jon Pertwee, Nicholas Courtney, script editor Terrance Dicks and writers Bob Baker and Dave Martin
- Original 1972 BBC1 trail
- Original 1981 *Five Faces of Doctor Who* BBC2 trail
- Panopticon 1993 interview with Jon Pertwee, Katy Manning and Nicholas Courtney

And so the last DVD release of anniversary year is upon us – and it was originally supposed to be the first! While there can be little argument that *The Three Doctors* is an apt choice for release on such a special occasion, how does this story fit into the complex secret formula that BBC Worldwide and the Restoration Team have derived for determining their release schedules? "Er ..." hesitates content producer Steve Roberts, "it's a good Pertwee story, and it's also a good anniversary story. As simple as that, in all honesty!" Oh dear. Apparently I'm seeing patterns that aren't there ...

Of course, *The Three Doctors* has been on the cards for quite some time now, and was scheduled for release in January and then July of this year. How come it's taken so long? "The delay was purely down to somebody in BBC Marketing finding out that Corgi were producing a model of Bessie," Roberts reveals, "and looking through a list of forthcoming releases to see if one featured the car. *The Three Doctors* obviously did, so they decided to move it later in the year so that it could be packed as an additional bonus. I thought at the time that it was a bit of a lame reason to delay the release of the disc by almost a year, but now that it's placed for November release I actually think it's a very good incentive for the Christmas market."

This is the first DVD release in quite some while that doesn't have any specially-shot footage on it – while there is the now-standard wealth of extra material, it's all archival stuff ... "Yes indeed," Roberts confirms. "But, again, it was originally scheduled for January 2003 release, and we were only really just getting into the swing of shooting 'new' extras rather than taking existing ones. We actually delivered the assets for this release in Summer 2002!"

The commentary track for this release is interesting in one unexpected fashion – in that none of the three contributors – particularly the producer who one might forgive being a bit precious about it – seem in the least bit shy about pointing out the production's shortcomings. This is actually quite refreshing, and one can't help wondering if this was a deliberate move – encouraging the participants down this route might draw more attention to the commentary and squeeze out a few sales ... "No, no," protests Roberts, "I think that's just the way it went!"

"We were dealing with deadlines all the time," comments *The Three Doctors* producer Barry Letts, "and those terrible jelly baby monsters really are awful ..." "People always say," adds his colleague Terrance Dicks, "were you aware that you were making classic television? I always say that what we were trying to do was make sure they didn't have to put the test card on at six o'clock on a Saturday night! Of course you're trying to make it good, but the main thing you're trying to do is get it done."

"What you're noticing in these commentaries," Dicks concludes, "is emotion recollected in tranquillity – we were probably screaming our heads off at the time! But afterwards it's done, and by then it's too late, and you can be fairly frank about it ..."

> "IT'S A VERY GOOD INCENTIVE FOR THE CHRISTMAS MARKET..."
>
> Steve Roberts on **The Three Doctors**' 'free gift'

Barry Letts and Terrance Dicks are interviewed in-depth in the next issue of **DWM**.

UNBOUND: EXILE

AN AUDIO DRAMA BY **NICHOLAS BRIGGS** PREVIEW BY **BENJAMIN COOK**

RELEASED OCTOBER 2003

Featuring The Doctor (Miss)

Enemies The Hangover of Doom, The Flatulence of Unreasonable Comfort ...

Setting Earth, present day, and Gallifrey

You'll like this is you like ... *Two Pints of Lager and a Packet of Crisps, Men Behaving Badly, The Simpsons, Supermarket Sweep*

Listen out for Odd comedy Time Lord double-acts!

The Doctor Arabella Weir
The Previous Doctor Nicholas Briggs
Cheese Jeremy James
Cherrie Hannah Smith
Time Lord 1 Toby Longworth
Time Lord 2 David Tennant
Mr Baggit Graham Duff

Sound Design ERS
Director Nicholas Briggs

Imagine, if you will, that the Time Lords have messed up – like, big style. Instead of exiling the Doctor to Earth, they let him escape – and he hid on the very last planet that they'd ever think to look for him (ahem) ... Earth. Imagine that he then used the old Time Lord trick of committing suicide to change sex (Time Lords can do that, you know) and imagine, if you can, that he became a she! Imagine that Doctor Who is a – whisper the word – *woman*!

"It's a big honour," says Arabella Weir, who's playing the first *bona fide* lady Doctor. "It's such a massive institution. To be the first female Doctor Who is 'wicked, man'!" Arabella is best known as one of the stars of *The Fast Show* and the author of such best-selling novels as *Does My Bum Look Big in This?*. How does acting compare to writing? "It's a lot easier," she laughs. "Who couldn't be an actor? You stand in a room and someone tells you what to do. That's not hard compared to constructing stories that people can follow. Acting is nothing like as satisfying. Well, I suppose it would be if I was stupid! That's what you want to be if you're an actor. Some of the best actors in the world are stupid!"

Jeremy James – if that is indeed his real name – isn't so much stupid as crackers. "I'm playing Cheese," he grins. "You see, when he drinks six pints, he starts to think that his beer smells of cheese. That's how he got his name." How does he find working with Arabella? "Actually, I really fancy her! I think she's married and she has children ... yawn, yawn, yawn! I say so what? She has a nice tan – I like ladies like that. Oh, and she's very funny. And women that belch – phwoar, that's a talent!"

What would Arabella do if she were a man? "Shag lots of women, I suppose." She shrugs. "Isn't that what all blokes want to do all day long? I'd just shag all the time. You can put that in your magazine, can't you?" Erm, yes. "And not listen to anyone – I'd do that! I'd not listen to anybody, shag lots of women and get pissed. And not care what anybody thought about me."

Which actress of the female species does Arabella think the Doctor should regenerate into next? "I'd quite like to see a foreign one. That'd be fun. Otherwise, Catherine Zeta Jones – she's a genius. Or Beyoncé Knowles – it'd be nice to see a black woman. Or Britney Spears – yeah, she'd make a damn good Doctor Who!" DWM

> "TO BE THE VERY FIRST FEMALE DOCTOR WHO IS WICKED, MAN!"
>
> Arabella Weir expresses her delight at being cast in **Exile**

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Stage Doo

NO ONE CAN HEAR YOU SCREAM

HE SAT IN A CUPBOARD AND DRANK BBC COFFEE WHILE BBCi'S NEW INTERNET ANIMATION **THE SCREAM OF THE SHALKA** WAS RECORDED. **BENJAMIN COOK** ASKED **RICHARD E GRANT** AND SOME OTHER NICE PEOPLE WHETHER LIFE'S A SCREAM. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE MAD TO ANSWER HIM, BUT IT HELPS …

"The Ninth Doctor, decided upon and cast by the BBC, in a story that sets its sights on the future," says Paul Cornell, "and provides a starting point for ongoing adventures without reformatting the show. Traditional but original, new monsters that behave like *Doctor Who* monsters should, and a new Doctor with a new way of doing things who's still very much the Doctor we know and love."

All sounds rather exciting, doesn't it? Acclaimed novelist and scriptwriter Paul Cornell is talking about *The Scream of the Shalka*, BBCi's new *Doctor Who* internet adventure. It'll even be released on DVD, don't you know? Maybe even broadcast on television – just like how proper *Doctor Who* used to be. Actually, according to Auntie BeeBeeCeeEye, this *is* proper *Doctor Who*.

He's back. And it's about time. Well, sort of …

Hands up who wants to be in a brand new **Doctor Who** story for BBCi? © Benjamin Cook

Left to right: Connor Moloney, Sophie Okonedo, Richard E Grant, Ben Morrison, Diana Quick and Jim Norton gather at BBC TV Centre. Photograph © BBC.

9:30am The green room. The Soundhouse Recording Studios, West London. The last time I was here was in December 2001, reporting on the recording of *Death Comes to Time* – radio producer Dan Freedman's attempt to resurrect *Doctor Who*, stick two fingers up at Radio 4, and take over the world all in one go. He mostly failed – but produced an admirably audacious and intentionally contentious example of what *Doctor Who* would be like if it were less like *Doctor Who* and a lot more like *Buffy*. A mere 18 months later, I'm back at the Soundhouse to report on yet another attempt to bring back *Doctor Who*. Déjà vu? Actually, it feels different this time …

Unlike BBCi's previous *Doctor Who* dramas, which also include *Real Time* and *Shada*, *The Scream of the Shalka* is fully animated, rather than radio with pictures – being brought to life by leading British studio Cosgrove Hall, renowned for such cartoon series as *Danger Mouse* and *Count Duckula*. Unlike *Death Comes to Time*, someone experienced in *Doctor Who* – namely Paul Cornell – has written the script. And, most exciting of all, *The Scream of the Shalka* introduces a new Doctor – the official Ninth incarnation, according to the BBC – played by international movie star, top-notch thespian and all-round sex symbol Richard E Grant. The bloke who was so superb in *Withnail and I* and wasn't Paul McGann. The Quite Handsome Doctor in that 1999 Comic Relief skit, *The Curse of Fatal Death*. Yes, that's the man.

Oh. My. God.

9:45am "I don't exactly see eye to eye with Doctor Who," admits Jim Norton, who plays the Doctor's military liaison, Major Thomas Kennett. "He seems to know the answer to everything, and has the temerity to give my soldiers orders, which of course I don't like, because I'm very much of the old school – but we develop a kind of respect for one another as the series goes on." As we chat in the green room, the other actors arrive one by one, and important-looking BBC people hurry in and out. This is *Shalka*'s second of five days in studio. "Today we're doing most of the scenes with Doctor Who and Kennett," Jim continues. "It's great fun – especially being an animated cartoon, where they're actually basing the characters on the faces of the actors. I spend most of my life being people other than me. This is a really good gig. It's a pleasant way to spend a week."

10:00am Richard E Grant arrives. Jim introduces us. "**Doctor Who Magazine**?" Richard exclaims, as if such a thing is impossible. "A magazine? About *Doctor Who*?" Er, yes – that'll be the one. "The show I know nothing about? I have never seen it. I know nothing about it."

In case you were under the impression that Richard E Grant is the new Doctor Who, rest assured, he isn't. Not according to his agent. "He won't even be wearing the scarf," she insisted when we spoke on the phone. He just happens to be providing the voice, that's all. Apparently, he doesn't want to be associated too closely with the role. His manner when we meet seems to confirm this.

"I think Benjamin here should fill you in on *Doctor Who*," Jim calls out as Richard wanders off towards the studio. Actually, he appears to be running. He's the Doctor, Jim, but not as we know it.

10:10am A nice lady from the BBC tells me how sorry she is, but I won't be allowed into the studio after all. Apparently, the director, Wilson Milam, is worried that a journalist might make the actors feel uncomfortable. I mumble something under my breath about understanding perfectly, but I am secretly delighted at having been called a 'journalist'. I'd never really considered writing about *Doctor Who* to be *bona fide* journalism before – that makes it sound like a proper job. My mum'll be thrilled.

Forbidden from the studio, I sit in the green room and talk more with Jim. "When my kids were little," he says, "they used to watch *Doctor Who* through the crack in the door. It's really scary. My daughter's thrilled about me doing this." Jim himself is no stranger to science fiction. He played Einstein in two episodes of *Star Trek: The Next Generation* ("I still get letters from Trekkies all over the world") and several different characters in *Babylon 5*. "I think the same law applies to playing extraterrestrials as playing ordinary characters, which is: less is more. It doesn't work otherwise. You can't send it up. You have to be truthful."

10:15am The nice lady from the BBC is back. Apparently, I'm not allowed to sit in the green room after all. Or talk to Jim. Actors can't relax around journalists, she says. And I'm a journalist. "Surely," protests Jim, "the people who want to talk to Ben will talk to Ben, and those who don't, won't?" You'd have thought, wouldn't you? But the nice lady is adamant. She suggests I sit outside in the car park. I mumble something about needing some fresh air anyway, but I am secretly wondering how I'm supposed to report on the recording of *The Scream of the Shalka* from the car park. "It's not as though you're *The News of the World*," says Jim, shaking his head. "I am sorry, Ben."

I head out to the car park – where I sit and drink juice with James Goss, BBCi Cult's Senior Content Producer, who's very nice and terribly apologetic. At least it's not raining.

10:30am It starts raining.

10:35am There's something oddly frustrating about sitting in a stationery cupboard, relieving the tension by doodling on garishly-coloured post-it notes, while Richard E Grant is recording *Doctor Who* next door. But journalists aren't allowed in the studio. Or in the green room. And there isn't anywhere else for journalists to sit, except for outside in the car park. But it's raining outside. And so,

Craig Kelly plays local doctor Joe. © Benjamin Cook

believe it or not, I am sat in a stationery cupboard.

That's right – a stationery cupboard. It's smaller on the inside, I swear. But it's the only place for me to sit. Can you believe it?

I feel like Harry Potter in his cupboard under the stairs. If I crane my neck, I can see into the green room. To make me feel better, James Goss renames my cupboard 'The BBC Hospitality Suite'. It seems apt.

11:15am The nice BBC lady enters, followed by James Goss, who looks harassed. It's a bit of a squeeze, and things are about to get worse. The nice lady tells me that there's absolutely no chance of me interviewing Richard E Grant. None at all. "But we're the official **Doctor Who Magazine**," I holler at the nice lady, who's just doing her job. "We're BBC-licensed!" I begin to wish I had a badge to prove it. "How are we supposed to promote the new *Doctor Who*," I ask her, "without speaking to the new Doctor Who?" The BBC *invited* **DW**M here, for goodness' sake. The BBC lady mumbles something about being behind schedule, but I suspect she secretly feels like lamping me one.

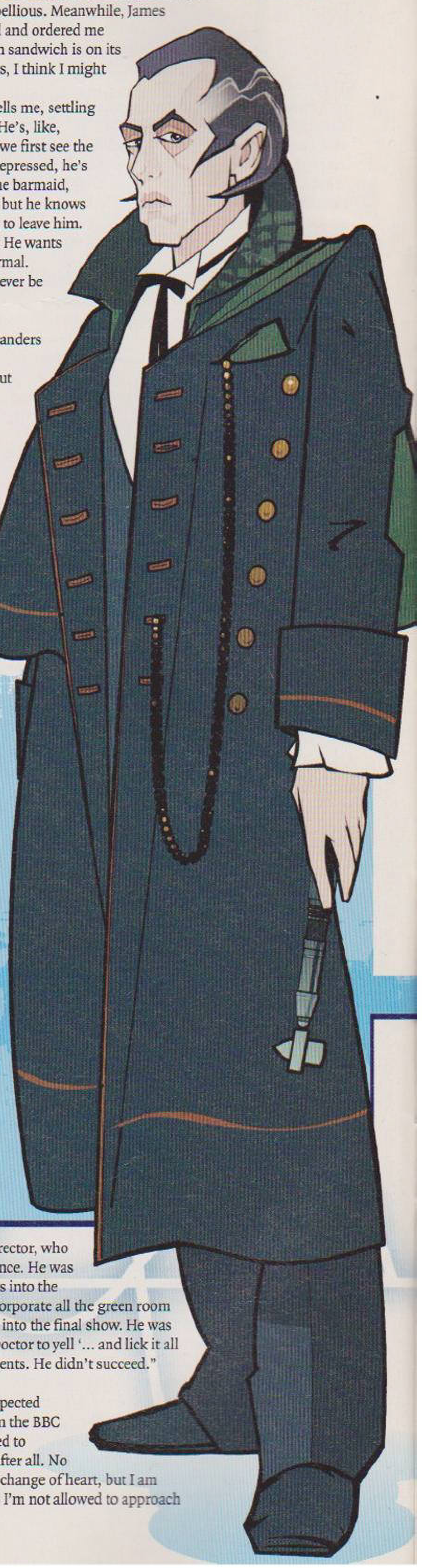
12:05pm I can't stay in the stationery cupboard forever, can I? James Goss pops in with a steaming mug of BBC coffee. He tells me that I'm not missing out on much. The cast have spent the last ten minutes recording footsteps, apparently. I ask James why an actor of Richard E Grant's calibre is spending precious studio time recording footsteps. James doesn't know, but he looks as though he needs a hug. After he has left, I notice some mysterious green stains on the carpet outside the cupboard – lots of them, like footprints. I wonder what James has trodden in?

1:00pm I am interrupted from investigating how many erasers can be crammed into an empty mug of BBC coffee by the sounds of the cast and crew breaking for lunch. What's more, it has stopped raining. James invites me back out to the car park. On my way out, I pass Richard E Grant sat on the green room floor, eating his lunch. The room is almost hidden beneath plates of sandwiches and nibbles. I'm told not to touch them. If I'd known, I'd have brought my own.

In the car park, James has erected a small umbrella over a plastic garden table. He says he'll find me some lunch if it's the last thing he does. I suspect it might be.

1:10pm Craig Kelly – immediately recognisable as Vince from *Queer as Folk* – pops outside to offer me some Kettle crisps, even though I'm a journalist. Brave man. I take a handful and feel rebellious. Meanwhile, James Goss has made a phone call and ordered me lunch. Apparently, a chicken sandwich is on its way in a taxi. When it arrives, I think I might interview it.

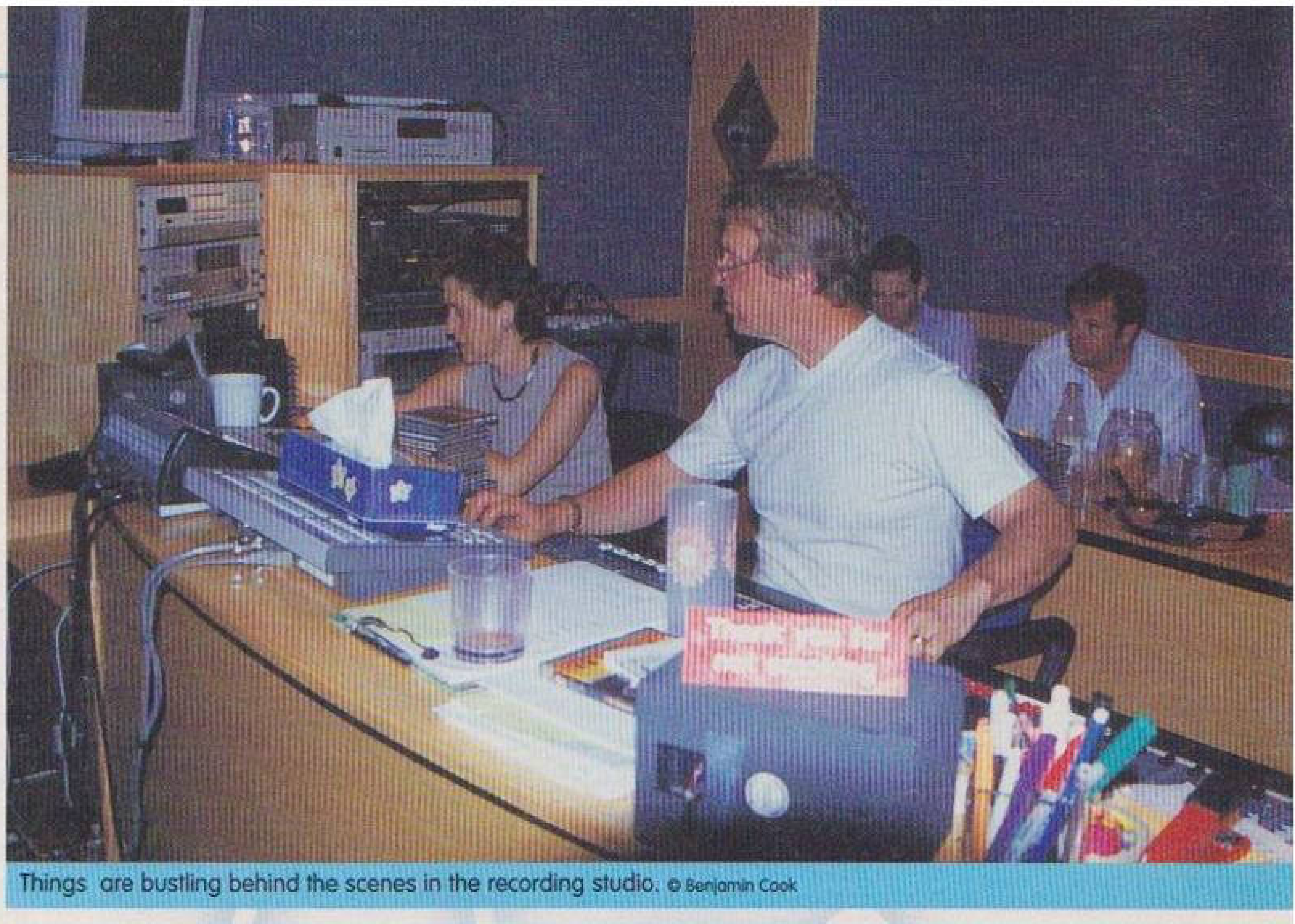
"I play a doctor," Craig tells me, settling down at the garden table. "He's, like, a small town doctor. When we first see the character, he's tense, he's depressed, he's totally in love with Alison the barmaid, played by Sophie Okonedo, but he knows deep down that she's going to leave him. His confidence is quite low. He wants everything to be back to normal. Unfortunately, things will never be normal again ..."



1:20pm Wilson Milam wanders outside and apologises. He doesn't specify what for – but I can guess. Before landing this directing job, Wilson hadn't actually heard of *Doctor Who*. "We wanted a director who had a great deal of experience of working with actors of the calibre of Richard E Grant and Sophie Okonedo," James Goss explains later. "The cast loved working with Wilson. He's a very calm director, who really cares about performance. He was determined to get extra lines into the production – he tried to incorporate all the green room banter into what was going into the final show. He was oddly keen on getting the Doctor to yell '... and lick it all over' at inappropriate moments. He didn't succeed."

1:35pm Something unexpected happens. The nice lady from the BBC tells me that I will be allowed to interview Richard E Grant after all. No clue is given to this sudden change of heart, but I am exceptionally grateful for it. I'm not allowed to approach Richard myself, but he'll be sent out to speak with me in the car park when he's finished his lunch. Maybe the BBC lady felt sorry for my having spent the morning in a cupboard? Maybe someone has checked with Fleet Street and realised that I'm not a proper journalist after all? Either way, I wonder whether my miserable morning in almost solitary confinement could have been avoided.

I am asked to phrase my questions to Richard carefully. I must try to avoid implying that he is Doctor Who. Apparently, he isn't. He's just an actor. He knows nothing about *Doctor Who*. So there.



Things are bustling behind the scenes in the recording studio. © Benjamin Cook

1:40pm My sandwich arrives in a taxi. I bet the chicken never travelled in such style when it was alive. Presently, Richard E Grant comes bounding out into the car park, oozing stardom from every crevice. I decide to save the sandwich for later. As the sun peeks out from behind a storm cloud, drying the parked cars and warming the tarmac, I settle down at the plastic garden table with Richard E Grant for his first ever interview about the Ninth Doctor ...

"I know nothing about it," he says, when I ask him whether he is at all familiar with science fiction. "I've only read one book – Arthur C Clarke's 2001: *A Space Odyssey*. Apart from that, I don't know anything. And I've never seen *Doctor Who*. I've never seen *Doctor Who*." Yep, he said it twice – with just a hint of a grin the second time around. "And I've never read it – I've never read any of the *Doctor Who* books. I feel like a complete – I don't know – fraud, really." What does he make of this Doctor Who character, then? "Ooh, I don't know. What I do know is that a huge number of people have very strong ideas about what he looks like, who should play him, who's the best person that has played him, and all those sorts of things." And does that scare Richard? "I think it's much more daunting," he replies, "if you're doing the film or TV version – people see your face – whereas this is a cartoon. I don't know if it has the same import."

What is it, then, about the profession that appeals to Richard? "It's a very good way of earning your living," he says. "You don't have any of the sense of responsibility that you have if you do a five-day regular job. There's a sense that you spend your life playing. And you never have to work with the same people, so you don't have to pace yourself – trying not to flirt with one person, trying to get on with the boss ... And when you're doing it, when you're acting, oh – it's fantastic, it's brilliant! You think, well, what more can you ask for?" Many actors say it's just a job ... "Oh no, it's never just a job. It's a fantastic, privileged way of living your life. The downside is that you never, in my experience, have a sense that you're in control of what is happening to you. It seems so opportunistic and haphazard how people end up in parts. It's a bit like John Lennon's quote that 'life is what happens to you while you're busy making other plans' – and I think that's very much like an actor's career."

> "People have very strong ideas about **Doctor Who**, but I think it would be much more daunting to do it as a TV version!" **Richard E Grant**

He continues: "That I've ended up having parts in films at all is a real bonus to me, because I thought, at best, I'd work in the theatre, but not any chance in TV or film. And being unemployed is just horrible, because your self-esteem gets shot to pieces. If you're an actor and somebody says, 'What have I seen you in?' and you go through a list of 50 credits and the person asking you hasn't heard of any of them, they disbelieve that you are what you claim to be. It sort of rubs out your identity in that moment. If you say you're a lawyer, nobody says, 'What have been your most famous cases?' That seems to be a common denominator for most actors. You're as good as your last job. The other old standby for anyone in the arts is 'They're not as good as their early work'."

Of course, Richard is still best known for cult classic British movie *Withnail and I*. Does he ever tire of that association? Apparently not. "It's only when I'm in a situation like this, when you're asking me, that the question comes up. On a day-to-day basis, I never think about it. It's just so long ago now. If it shows on TV or satellite, then you get a slew of people wanting autographed pictures, but otherwise it's not something that I ever really think about." Does he prefer playing bastards or good guys? "The bastards usually have more interest. Very often, audiences support the villains much more. *Doctor Who* is different, though. It's set in the future or outer space or whatever – it doesn't fall into the same categories as, say, a Bruce Willis movie."

What does Richard make of his *Withnail* co-star Paul McGann? "He has a great Liverpudlian wit. He doesn't take himself or anything seriously – he doesn't disappear up his own fundament, talking about acting or the greater meaning of life. He's very good company, very self-deprecating. And he has an amazing effect on women. He must be the sexiest man alive! People just go down in skittles when they're around him." How does Richard deal with his own sex symbol status? He was, after all, the Quite Handsome Doctor ... "I think this is just a great thrill to hear!" He flashes a grin. "I have no real sense of being a sex symbol whatsoever. I've been married for a long time. When you're married and have children, your faults and shortcomings are so constantly spotlighted and focused upon that you don't really think about that stuff!"

SCRIPT OF THE SHALKA

A fully animated *Doctor Who* adventure was an obvious next step for BBCi. The success of *Real Time* and *Shada* had established that *Doctor Who* has a loyal online audience. "We'd seen the audiences grow out of all proportion to expectations," says producer James Goss. "*Shada*, for instance, brought in an average audience of 30,000 per episode, which is comparable to a popular digital TV audience and brilliant for online. It made sense to try something more ambitious for our next project, and it was important to do something spectacular for the show's anniversary." They also wanted something that they could distribute on DVD, and attempt to interest a broadcast channel with. The big event BBCi wanted for this new start was a new Doctor ...

"Paul McGann has been the Doctor for a very long time," says Paul Cornell, "and to keep him on would have lessened the impact of this webcast considerably. It'd be hard to say, what with all the other continuities the Eighth Doctor is involved in, that this was a genuine, bold continuation, something that was heading off into the future." "It's a new medium, a new start for *Doctor Who*," James adds. "We're really keen for the new audience and the dedicated *Doctor Who* audience to get to know him at the same time. A new Doctor also gives us freedom to take him forward without looking over our shoulders. Richard E Grant is the 'now' of *Doctor Who*. No one knows how his story is going to end, or what the next step will be. It's very exciting!"

"Fans can't be dictated to from on high," says Paul. "When the webcast is out, they'll decide whether it's 'real' or not."

In a departure from BBCi's previous two *Doctor Who* webcasts, *The Scream of the Shalka* has been made without any involvement from Big Finish Productions. James Goss says: "Big Finish has done an awful lot for *Doctor Who* in the last five years – not only on their own, but also with BBCi. We decided not to work with them on this project for various reasons, but we'd certainly consider working with Big Finish on future projects."

The plot for *The Scream of the Shalka* is being kept closely under wraps. "It's a very traditional story – English town under siege from alien forces – told in a very traditional way," Paul explains, "while featuring no scenes, lines, actions or reversals from the past. It's trying to be exactly what a new *Who* production team, given a brief of not changing the nature of the show, and knowing in detail what their predecessors had done, would come up with. Anyone who last saw the show in 1975 would recognise this, but would hopefully be surprised by it in the way they would by any new episode from then."

Ahem – why does the Doctor have a mobile phone, then? "When he went to alien planets and future dimensions," James reasons, "he happily used whatever form of communication came to hand – wrist radios, video phones, Venusian eyebrow waggling. He has a mobile phone, but he doesn't make a big thing of it. And no, he doesn't spend large amounts of time texting smileys to his best friend Sandra," he adds, forestalling my next question.

How do Paul and James think *Doctor Who* fans will receive *The Scream of the Shalka*? "I'd like them to give it a couple of episodes before they make up their mind," says Paul. "Narrative-wise, it should be as familiar to them as a warm bath ... well, with a couple of piranhas in it! In many ways, it's the answer to what they've been after all this time. But can they cope with animation? I suspect that when they see what we've done, they'll come round. That's my hope, anyway. As for what I'd say to those who don't like it, it can only be – sorry, we did our best, I understand."

"We've tried our hardest to make great *Doctor Who*," James says. "We didn't set out to annoy anyone, upset cherished ideas of fan continuity or to irritate *Doctor Who* fans. We set out to entertain, and to bring *Doctor Who* back to life for a dedicated and new generation of fans. We look forward to the feedback." If it's mostly positive, will there be more Ninth Doctor adventures? "We hope so. The feeling is optimistic about the Ninth Doctor's future. We've established a series guide for future adventures. Further adventures would be true to the spirit of the original show, but will be dynamic and innovative."

Scream of the Shalka writer Paul Cornell © Ben Cook

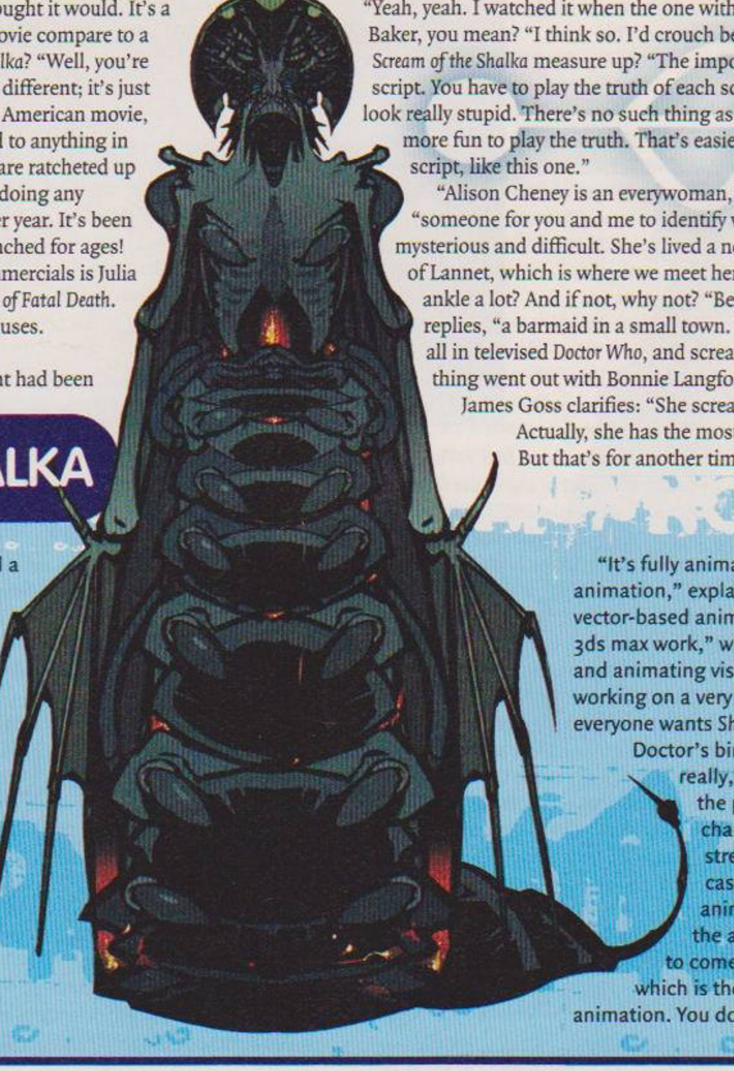
"I'd love to do one more story," takes up Paul, "answering the questions about the Doctor's recent past that *The Scream of the Shalka* raises." For example, Sir Derek Jacobi has recorded a cameo appearance as the Master – How very intriguing! "But it's up to the BBC if they want to employ me again," says Paul, adding: "I'll be satisfied now even if they don't – I've done my best in my dream job. It's the completion of the aim of my writing life. My work here is done!"

I ask Richard whether he has seen Alistair McGowan's BBC1 impressionist show. "No, I haven't," he jumps in, "but I've heard that he portrays me as a great big poof!" How does Richard feel about that? "I haven't watched it, but ... what can I say? I apologise to ... well, the gay fraternity in general, if they think that I am misrepresenting them," he laughs. "Alistair McGowan has a lot to answer for!"

Richard tells me that his greatest unfulfilled ambition is to direct a film. "Yeah, I want to direct. Actually, I've written one. I'm in the process of casting it at the moment. It's taking much longer than I thought it would. It's a great dream of mine." How does working on a movie compare to a more modest production, like *The Scream of the Shalka*? "Well, you're still working with actors, so the process isn't that different; it's just the amount of money involved. If you work on an American movie, the size of the budget is so humongous compared to anything in Europe, so the neuroses of the producing people are ratcheted up much higher." Talking of money, will Richard be doing any more Argos ads? "Yep! I'm doing them for another year. It's been the most successful ad campaign that they've launched for ages! Their sales have rocketed." His co-star in the commercials is Julia Sawalha, who also appeared with him in *The Curse of Fatal Death*. "She's a very funny person to be around," he enthuses. "We have a laugh, basically."

From the way that the BBC people and his agent had been talking, and from my own first impressions, I was worried that Richard E Grant would be indifferent, condescending, standoffish and downright aloof. In fact, he is none of these things. He happens to be lovely, passionate about his work, and not averse – I don't think – to giving *Doctor Who* his best shot. Okay, so he's not keen to be pigeonholed as Doctor Who himself – but who can really blame him?

STYLE OF THE SHALKA



They're tiny. They're toony. They're all a little loony. And in this cartoony they're invading your PC. "We worked with BBCi on their previous, non-*Who* webcast, *The Ghosts of Albion*, and were pleased with the result," says Cosgrove Hall's Steve Maher, who is handling the animation direction on *The Scream of the Shalka*, "so it was a case of finding another project that we could work on. I think an animated series of *Doctor Who* is long overdue. It can do some things that are very difficult to do in live action on a limited budget." Steve was onboard throughout the recording and post-production, talking about ideas with the cast, the director, the sound engineers and BBCi.

"It's fully animated, lip-synched, drawn animation," explains Steve. "We're using a vector-based animation programme, and some 3ds max work," which is software for modelling and animating visual effects, apparently. "We're working on a very tight schedule, because everyone wants *Shalka* to be ready for the Doctor's birthday, obviously, so we have, really, until the end of October. For the principal three humanoid characters, we'll be making strenuous efforts – certainly in the case of the Doctor – for the animated characters to resemble the actors. As for the rest, that has to come out of the characterisation, which is the way it usually works in animation. You don't often base the character

And here's the thing – would Richard consider doing more *Doctor Who* in the future? "If they asked me, yeah. I'd like to do that," he says. "It'd be fun – you know, to step back into the Doctor's well-worn shoes. Yeah, why not?"

So, there you go – Richard is the new Doctor Who after all. Well, sort of. What a relief. For what it's worth, I think he'll do just fine.

Jim Norton plays Major Kennett. © Benjamin Cook

1:55pm Mr and Mrs Paul Cornell arrive, but there's no time to say hello, because Sophie Okonedo has just pulled up a chair at the garden table. "Richard is a perfect Doctor," she tells me. "I mean, didn't you think, before you met him, that he'd be perfect casting? As soon as I heard that he was playing the Doctor, I thought, 'Of course he should play Doctor Who! There's no one better!' He's hilariously funny as well. I play his new sidekick, Alison Cheney – I think she's quite blown away by the Doctor. She's quite a, sort of, feisty, tough woman, who wants to speak out about things. And she has a boyfriend – she wants to chuck him, but she feels like she can't."

Sophie Okonedo's name's not that familiar? Ah, but you know the face. She's appeared in films such as *Ace Ventura: When Nature Calls*, *This Year's Love* and TV dramas including *Clocking Off* and *Cross My Heart*. How does she feel about being the new *Who* girl? "I am, aren't I? I'm looking forward to seeing it when it's animated. It'll be really interesting." Did she watch *Doctor Who* when it was on the telly? "Yeah, yeah. I watched it when the one with the curly hair was in it." Tom Baker, you mean? "I think so. I'd crouch behind the sofa." How does *The Scream of the Shalka* measure up? "The important thing is that it's a good script. You have to play the truth of each scene. If you overplay it, you just look really stupid. There's no such thing as a good or bad character. It's much more fun to play the truth. That's easier when you're given a strong script, like this one."

"Alison Cheney is an everywoman," explains Paul Cornell later, "someone for you and me to identify with while the Doctor is being mysterious and difficult. She's lived a normal life in Sheffield and the town of Lannet, which is where we meet her." Does she scream and twist her ankle a lot? And if not, why not? "Because she's a normal person," he replies, "a barmaid in a small town. Twisted ankles hardly happen at all in televised *Doctor Who*, and screaming as some sort of weird fetish thing went out with Bonnie Langford."

James Goss clarifies: "She screams, but not in an ankle-twisty way. Actually, she has the most important scream in *Doctor Who*. But that's for another time ..."

> "Anyone who last saw **Doctor Who** in 1975 would recognise this, but would hopefully be very surprised by it too!" **Writer, Paul Cornell**

Happily, Sophie gets on particularly well with her on-screen boyfriend, Craig Kelly. "In fact, he lives round the corner from me," she reveals. "I often see him, but I never felt I could go up and say hello, but now we know each other, it's really nice and I can say hello to him more often."

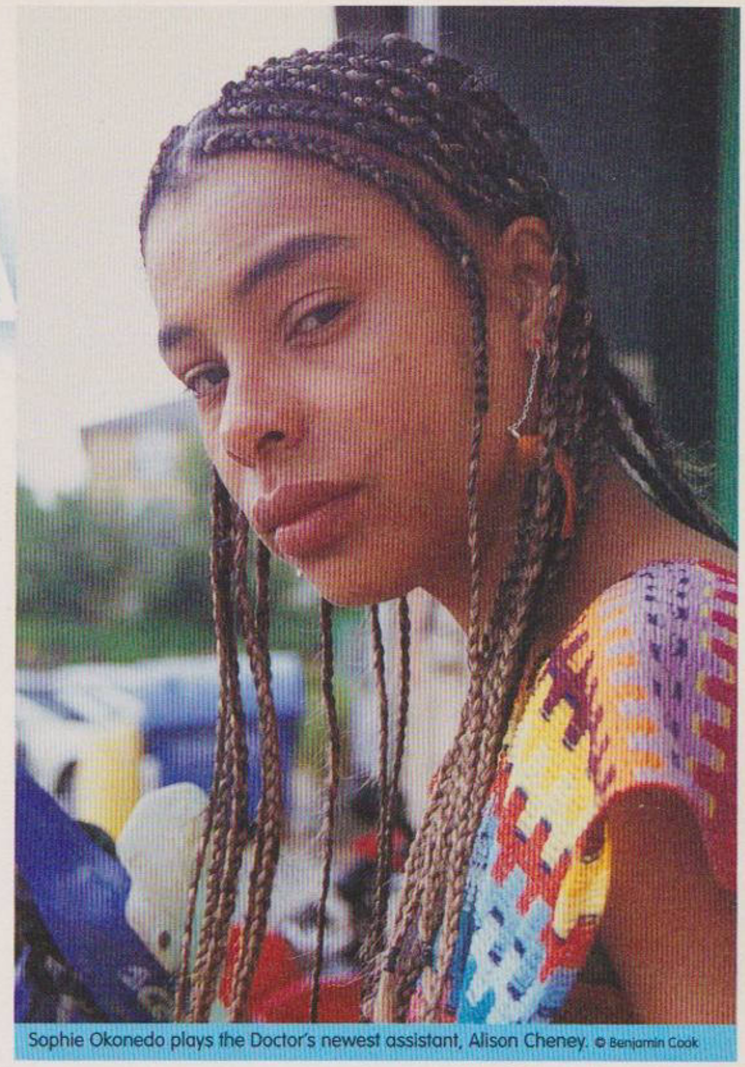
2:10pm Lunch is over. Paul Cornell is ushered away into the studio. He looks excited (the huge grin stayed on his face all day). I stay in the car park and chat to SFX magazine's Steve and Nick, who have just arrived. They're thinking of using the headline 'Withnail and BBCi' in SFX. I groan loudly and shake my head, but I make a mental note to suggest the pun to Clayton for a headline in **DWM** ...

3:00pm Here's a familiar face – David Tennant spots me in the car park and says an enthusiastic hello. We met a few weeks earlier at the recording of Big Finish's *Sympathy for the Devil*. Apparently, he's recording a Radio 4 adaptation of Terry Pratchett's *The Amazing Maurice and his Educated Rodents*; when David found out that *Doctor Who* was being recorded in the studio next door, he sweet-talked Wilson Milam into giving him a cameo role. "I play Caretaker Two," he says proudly. "It's very hard not to get excited. I would kill to do more of these." David is a fully-fledged, card-carrying *Doctor Who* fan. "My granny even knitted me a long Tom Baker scarf. And a cricket jumper! I used to jump around the back garden making up my own stories! As I got older, I'd make up my own seasons!" In the back garden? "Yeah – casting myself in all the parts. Oh God, how embarrassing."

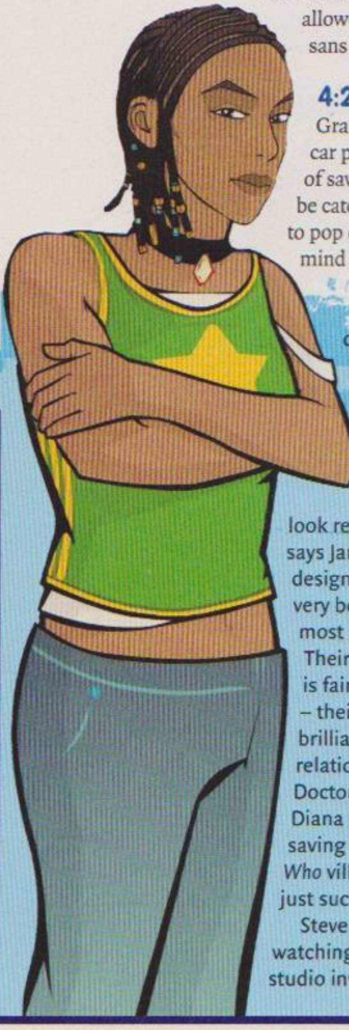
3:30pm It starts to rain again. It's one of those days – sunshine one minute, downpour the next. I'm forced back inside. Three burly men with clipboards are standing in my stationery cupboard (maybe they know something I don't), so I take a seat in the green room and hope that no one will notice. No one does.

3:45pm Craig Kelly emerges from the studio. We watch *Arthur* on the telly in the green room. It's a particularly exciting episode about coping with fear and fun with a porcelain doll. Craig wonders whether he'll be animated like Arthur in *The Scream of the Shalka*. "I've always wanted to be a cartoon character," he says. "It's on the to-do list, you know? It doesn't get much better."

Of course, *The Scream of the Shalka* isn't Craig's first brush with *Doctor Who*. Not so long ago, in a certain TV show, he played a certain character who had a fascination with *Doctor Who* ... "I thought that was why they'd cast me in *Shalka*," he admits, "because a lot of people will make that connection. I was aware of *Doctor Who* before playing Vince, but I was never fully into it. I got more into it because [*Queer as Folk* creator] Russell T Davies – an absolutely brilliant man – gave me loads of books to read and loads and loads of videos. It's ironic and cool that I've been able to do this." Is Craig at all surprised by the phenomenal success of *Queer as Folk*? "No. I always knew it was going to be a hit. That's why I did it. It's not often you get a chance to do something that groundbreaking. And this, too, in a way, is groundbreaking. Has there ever been a *Doctor Who* cartoon?" I shake my head. "Well, there you go!" He laughs. "I only do groundbreaking stuff!"


Sophie Okonedo plays the Doctor's newest assistant, Alison Cheney. © Benjamin Cook

4:00pm The cast have been given a break, so I'm allowed to take a peek inside the studio. Wilson lets me take some photos – while there aren't any actors about, obviously. Maybe because I've spent much of the day in a stationery cupboard, Wilson tells me that, if I come back two days later, he'll grant me an interview and let me take some photos of the actors in studio. I take him up on his offer, but I have a wasted journey. When I pop back two days later, Wilson is too busy to give me an interview (he apologises – once again) and I'm allowed all of 20 seconds to take shots of the cast – sans the leading man – in studio. Hey ho.



4:25pm It has stopped raining. Richard E Grant is sat on his own at the garden table in the car park, taking a break from the hustle and bustle of saving planet Earth from the Shalka. Wilson must be catching up on his recording schedule. I am about to pop outside and ask Richard whether he wouldn't mind posing for a photo or two when I remember that, under BBC guidelines, I am not allowed to speak to actors. I have to ask James Goss whether I'm allowed to ask Richard for a photo. But James doesn't know. He wanders off (or is he running?) to find someone who does.

design on an actor ..."

"One of the strengths of animation is that the monsters can look really intriguing," says James Goss. "The design of the Shalka is very bold, making the most of the medium. Their actual concept is fairly strong as well – their leader has a brilliantly pithy relationship with the Doctor. It helps that Diana Quick had been saving up her *Doctor Who* villain acting for just such an occasion!"

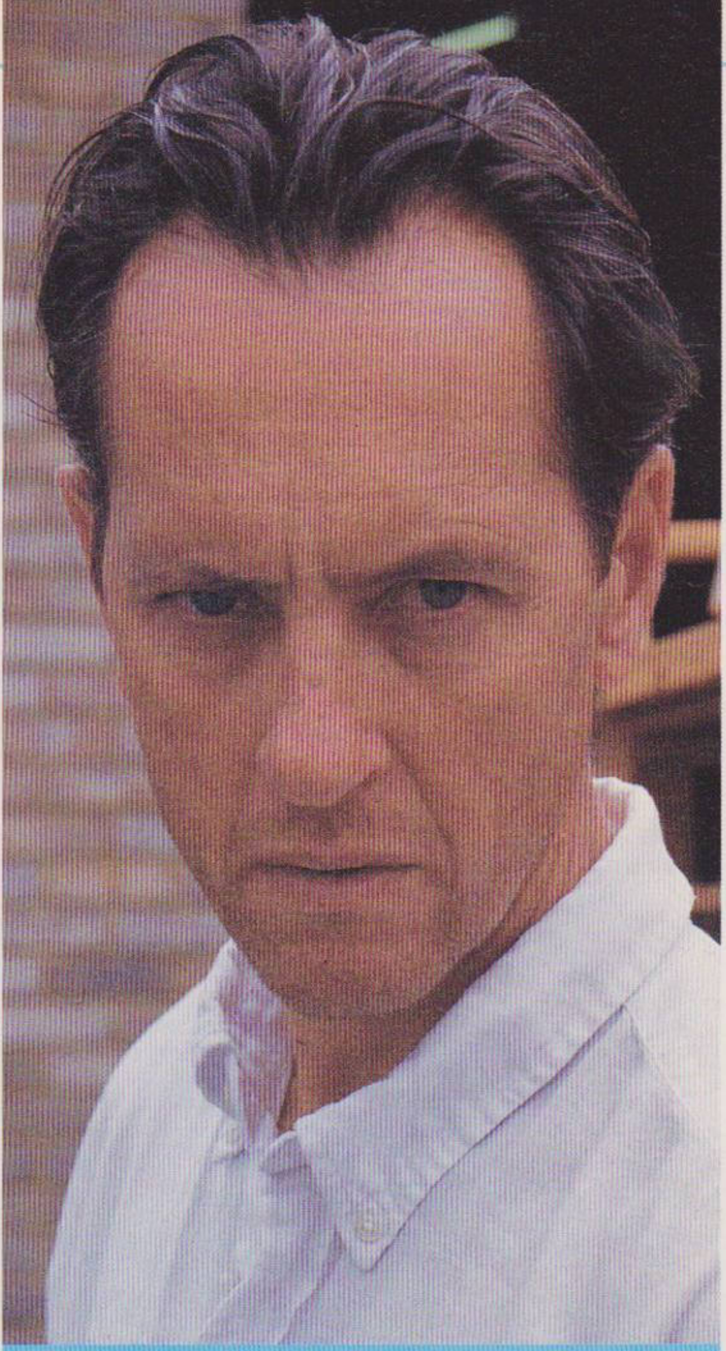
Steve Maher found watching the actors in studio invaluable. "It made a huge difference. I didn't know what Richard's take on the Doctor would be like," he says, "but it does, of course, affect the way that we design his costume, for instance. My job in studio was to give input from an animation point of view. And sound effects – I mean, I'm designing the Shalka's layer, so I had to know what the Shalka's layer sounded like." The special effects were recorded 'live' in studio. However, the actual animation could not begin until Cosgrove Hall had heard an edit of the soundtrack. "It's intrinsic to the whole process," insists Steve. "Reading the script is important to get a basic overview, but it's very difficult to design the characters until we hear a complete audio edit. The edit that we've heard is sounding fantastic ..."

4:35pm I am waiting to find out whether I can ask – just ask – the man sitting a few feet away from me whether or not I can take his photograph. Craig Kelly is amused. "Go on – while they're not looking," he calls out, averting his attention from *Countdown* on the telly. "Ask Richard for a photo – I dare you! Tell him it's for the cover!" Presently, Martin Trickery, commissioning editor of Drama and Entertainment for BBCi, emerges from the studio and explains, helpfully, that nobody knows whether or not I'm allowed to approach Richard. And besides, while we've been tangled in red tape, Richard has closed his eyes. And may or may not be asleep.

I mutter something under my breath. Three consonants, one vowel.

4:36pm Oh-so defiantly (well, sort of), I march outside and ask Richard whether he'd kindly pose for some photographs. Martin Trickery and James Goss watch fearfully from the green room. Of course, Richard is lovely and happily agrees to be snapped – a "Sure, no problem!" and a "Where do you want me?" We amble over to some crates at the far end of the car park (a better backdrop, I feel, than a Renault Clio and a garden table) and Richard strikes some poses exclusively for **DWM**. "Can you give me a scary, kind of, alien face?" I ask him and

Director Wilson Milam marshalls his troops. © Benjamin Cook

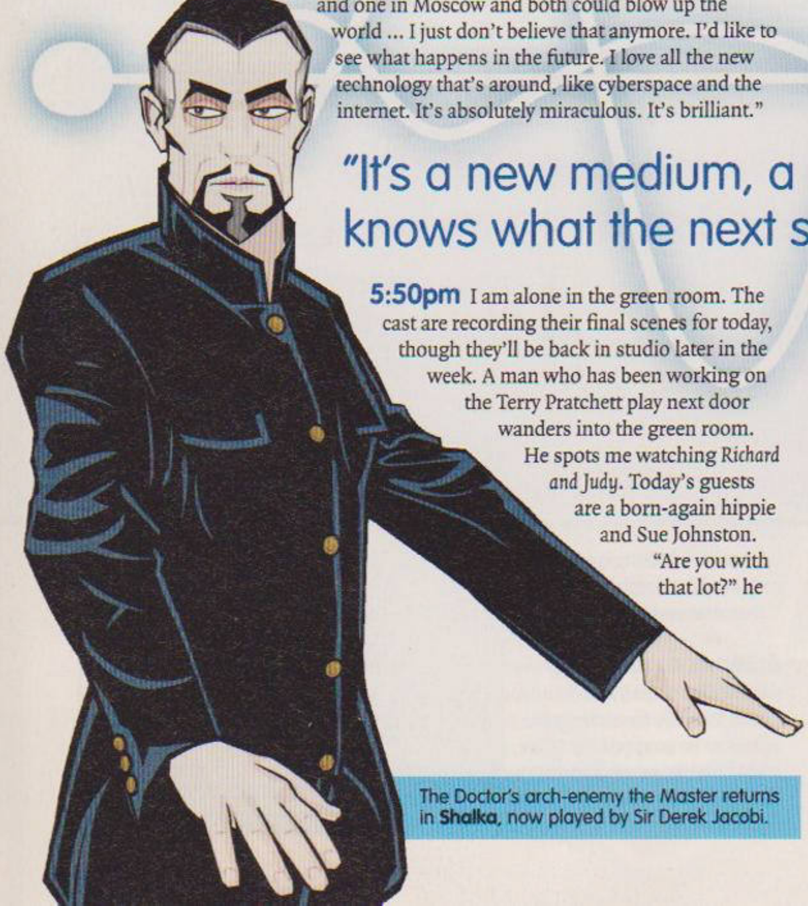


Richard E Grant gives **DWM** his best 'scary alien face'. © Benjamin Cook

immediately feel silly. But Richard is an absolute gentleman and a consummate professional – he flashes another grin and strikes some moody-Colin-Baker-style poses, followed by a couple of action-hero-Jon-Pertwee-style shots. This man is wonderful. I want to give him a hug, but decide against it. The BBC suits might have something to say about me manhandling Doctor Who. I settle for a handshake instead.

4:50pm I'm back in the green room, watching *Countdown* with Doctor Who. He's surprisingly good at it. Well, he would be, wouldn't he? I suggest that Richard Whitely may be a Time Lord. Richard E Grant looks sickened. Anxious to change the subject, I ask Richard where he would go if he had a TARDIS. "Into the future," he says, without hesitation, "because I think things are better now than they've ever been." And they'll be even better in the future? "As people see more sense, yeah. I mean, since the Second World War, the threat of nuclear warfare seems much more distant; when I grew up, the Cold War was so omnipresent, the great myth that there was a red button in Washington and one in Moscow and both could blow up the world ... I just don't believe that anymore. I'd like to see what happens in the future. I love all the new technology that's around, like cyberspace and the internet. It's absolutely miraculous. It's brilliant."

"It's a new medium, a new start for **Doctor Who**. No one knows what the next step is going to be!" **BBCi producer, James Goss**



The Doctor's arch-enemy the Master returns in **Shalka**, now played by Sir Derek Jacobi.

5:50pm I am alone in the green room. The cast are recording their final scenes for today, though they'll be back in studio later in the week. A man who has been working on the Terry Pratchett play next door wanders into the green room. He spots me watching *Richard and Judy*. Today's guests are a born-again hippie and Sue Johnston. "Are you with that lot?" he asks, nodding towards the studio, "cos I did *Doctor Who* once," he says, before I have a chance to reply. "And do you know what? It was bollocks!" Not recognising his face, I ask the man what period of the show he worked on, trying not to let slip my fanboy credentials. It turns out that this is the man responsible for those terrible talking books that were released a few years back – abridged versions of the Target novelisations, read by Jon Pertwee or Peter Davison. I briefly consider kicking Target Tape Man on behalf of *Doctor Who* fans everywhere, but then I think better of it. "I had to cut them right down," he says, referring to the novelisations, which he apparently abridged himself. "The people who wrote the television series made it up as they went along. The poor bastards writing the books had nothing to go on." He shakes his head in despair. "But there are 5,000 completists, right? Mad fans who'll buy any old crap. It's the *Doctor Who* fans. They're as mad as f–"

Target Tape Man is broken off by the sound of the studio door creaking open and actors emerging, laughing, talking and bidding each other safe journeys home. Today's recording is done. And what a day it's been – from the stationery cupboard, to the car park, to the green room. I'd best say some farewells of my own. "Anyway, good luck with your project," says Target Tape Man, heading out into the car park, no doubt relieved that he hasn't encountered any 'mad' *Doctor Who* fans here today. Bless him.

I mean, who would have noticed another madman around here? DWM

For all his hard work and help, **DWM** wishes to thank James Goss – without whom we'd never have come out of the closet. **The Scream of the Shalka** will première at **www.bbc.co.uk/cult/doctorwho** in November.

GALAXY FOUR

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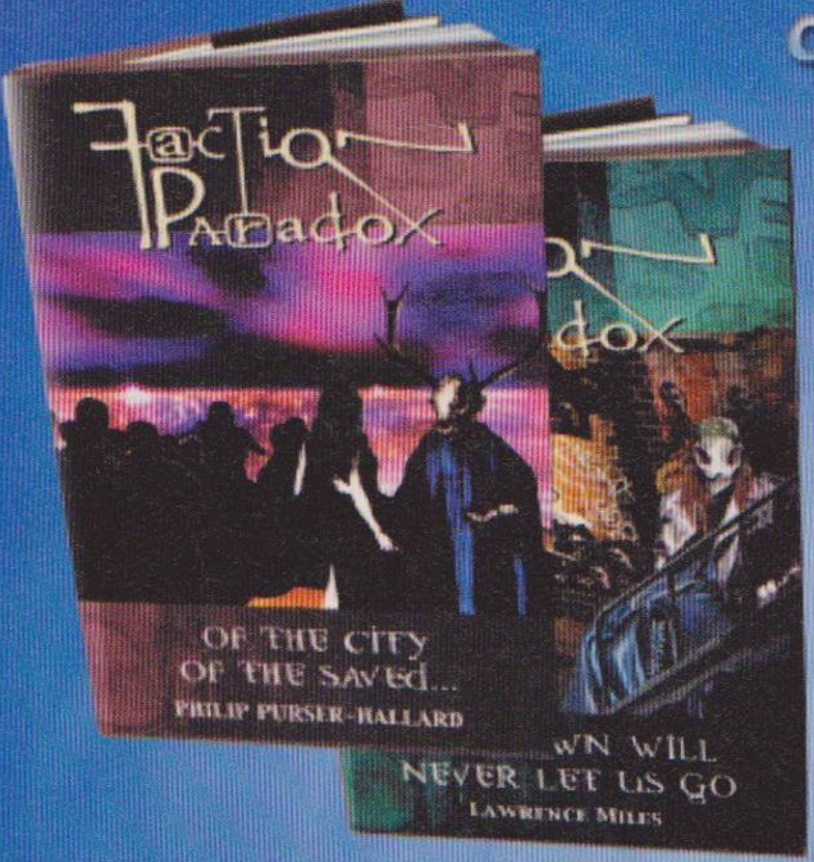
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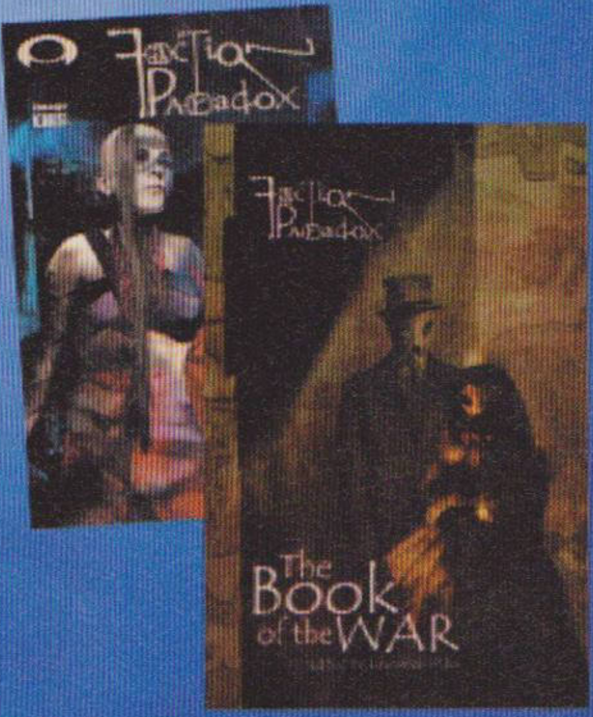
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THE ACCIDENTAL TOURIST

DURING THE 1970S, DOCTOR WHO WAS ENJOYING A PERIOD OF UNPRECEDENTED STABILITY. IN THE SECOND PART OF HIS LOOK AT THE DIFFERENT ROADS TAKEN OR AVOIDED, **DANIEL O'MAHONY** EXAMINES THE SHOW'S FLIRTATION WITH MYTHOLOGY AND DISCOVERS THE IMPACT ONE UNMADE STORY MIGHT HAVE HAD ON DOCTOR WHO'S DEVELOPMENT...

PART TWO:

CURSE OF THE CAT PEOPLE

> 'Perhaps the Guardians are Time Lords advanced to a higher degree along their own paths. Perhaps this is a test as to whether the Doctor is to qualify for advancement. Perhaps this is a gigantic fraud. Does the good guy always wear the white hat? Whatever the outcome, either individually or overall, the Doctor will arrive at his own conclusions and decisions in his own fashion. As always.'
>
> ***– Graham Williams in 1976, writing the strangest job application in history***

In the spring of 1963, CE Webber proposed a science-fiction drama series called *The Troubleshooters*, only to see his ideas metamorphose into *Doctor Who* instead. Three years later, the BBC coincidentally revived the title for a quintessentially 1960s corporate drama about the oil industry (which had actually begun the previous year under the title *Mogul*). Like many BBC productions of the period, its creators included many who had or would work on *Doctor Who* over the years. One was Anthony Read, who produced *The Troubleshooters* in the early 1970s working closely with writer David Weir. Later, Reid would be appointed script editor of *Doctor Who* by the series' new producer, Graham Williams, to replace the outgoing Robert Holmes. Read, recalling his *Troubleshooters* days, brought Weir in to write for the series. In 1977, the trio of collaborators worked together on a story that never happened and – by not happening – would change the way we perceive *Doctor Who* forever ...

In the 1960s, *Doctor Who* had been a delicate creature with a limited life expectancy. Lead actor William Hartnell demonstrated a madman's optimism by predicting a run of five years for a programme that had been lucky to survive five minutes. Up until 1970 there was the constant, mundane possibility that the series might be axed; Hartnell was right – a five year life-span was probably all that could be expected for a successful popular drama in this period. Yet there doesn't seem to have been a serious prospect of cancellation at all between 1970 (when a good response to the viewing figures of Jon Pertwee's first season prompted a stay of execution) and 1981 (when the poor viewing figures for Tom Baker's final year revealed the first cracks in the series' invulnerability), a sure sign that the series had become a popular phenomenon. For *Doctor Who*, if nothing else, the 1970s were a secure, untroubled decade.

After years of cult obscurity, we tend to forget how visible *Doctor Who* was in the 1970s. Both Jon Pertwee and Tom Baker were among the best-known faces on television, and no first-run episode broadcast between January 1971 and January 1980 was seen by fewer than six million viewers. The nature of the Doctor changed in this decade. William Hartnell and Patrick Troughton had played the series' lead but it took Pertwee to reinvent the Doctor as its *star*, while Baker went one step further and made himself almost the *raison d'être* for the programme. *Doctor Who* was now a juggernaut, carried forward by its own momentum and the charismatic energy of its leads. Oh, it could be steered and directed by the production team, but it would take a brave and foolish producer to try to change its course completely.

If anything was going to affect the way *Doctor Who* was created in the 1970s, it would be factors outside the narrow world of production offices and studios. Change would be a response to public feedback, or the institutional behaviour of the BBC, or even the popular culture in which the programme was immersed. It's telling that this period saw the fiercest criticism of the series from the National Viewers and Listeners Association, as if, subconsciously, Mary Whitehouse recognised that this was an opportunity for her aggressive busyboddery to have an impact. This was also the heyday of genre pastiche, with stories as varied as *The Curse of Peladon*, *The Talons of Weng-Chiang* and *City of Death* trying very successfully to drag *Doctor Who* up in fancy-dress. That doesn't suggest real *change* – quite the opposite, it was the series' stability that lent it confidence to flaunt its influences without ever being overwhelmed. It would take a catastrophically successful piece of pop culture to threaten the programme's place in its audience's affections.

It's a myth that no one saw *Star Wars* coming – it was always meant to be one of 20th Century Fox's big films for the summer of 1977 – but no one realised just *how* big. The film's director, George Lucas, had struggled to get film executives to understand his early drafts, couched in obscure pulpy mystical descriptions of characters like 'Mace Windu, a revered Jedi-bendu of Opuchi who was related to Usby C J Thape, padawaan learner of the famed Jedi'. At best he was hoping for a hit on the scale of *Planet of the Apes* or *Logan's Run* and no one (with the semi-apocryphal exception of Steven Spielberg) thought it would smash the box office record set by *Jaws*. Perhaps if it had been a more modest success then it wouldn't have had to put up with so much opprobrium over the past quarter-century. *Star Wars* has become a whipping-boy, blamed (not entirely fairly) for the downfalls of – variously – Hollywood, science fiction and Western civilisation. So why not *Doctor Who* as well?

Star Wars' immediate effect wasn't so much on the programme itself as on Tom Baker's efforts to get a *Doctor Who* feature film into production. A preview screening of Lucas' film left Baker and his collaborators disillusioned with the standard of the competition – at this time homegrown fantasy cinema had changed little since the Dalek movies of the 1960s, and Milton Subotsky was still foisting the likes of *At the Earth's Core* onto the nation's hapless cinemagoers. *Star Wars* raised the stakes so high that it killed Baker's *Doctor Who Meets Scratchman* project – and even the star's mad-eyed charisma couldn't do much to save it. On the small screen, the impact would be longer term and rather subtler than hindsight suggests. The sedate pace of change is best illustrated by the adoption of a star-field title sequence to bring the series into line with the new post-Lucas aesthetic for visual science fiction: it didn't appear until *The Leisure Hive* in August 1980, by which time a second *Star Wars* film – *The Empire Strikes Back* – had already come and gone.

But why should *Star Wars* have had an effect at all? It's said that the new big-budget special effects culture made *Doctor Who*'s inexpensive life much harder simply by raising the standard beyond its capacity to compete. That's a reassuring argument for fans – who can then feel smugly superior on the grounds that *Star Wars* might have the flashy visuals and the pan-global recognition, but *Doctor Who* has the brains and the 'timeless storytelling qualities' – but also a superficial one. The series had always played against a background of glossy fantasy films, but the idea of it going head to head with, say, *2001: A Space Odyssey* is an absurd one because they're too dissimilar to be in direct competition (though 2001 does occasionally feel like a rejected John Wiles-era story). *Star Wars*, on the other hand, was trying *exactly the same thing* – telling exciting adventure stories in a light-science-fiction framework – and was nakedly successful at it on a scale that a humble BBC production could never dream of. Both are the product of the same melange of thinking, cultural influences and storytelling. The difference is in scale rather than tone. As the *Star Wars* sequels unfolded it became clear that Lucas had built his films around a dynastic conflict with an elaborate back-story in a well-defined universe. *Doctor Who*, on the other hand, just ambled along doing its own thing. *Star Wars* had a clear cosmology while *Doctor Who* had a rather ramshackle one, thrown together as circumstances demanded.

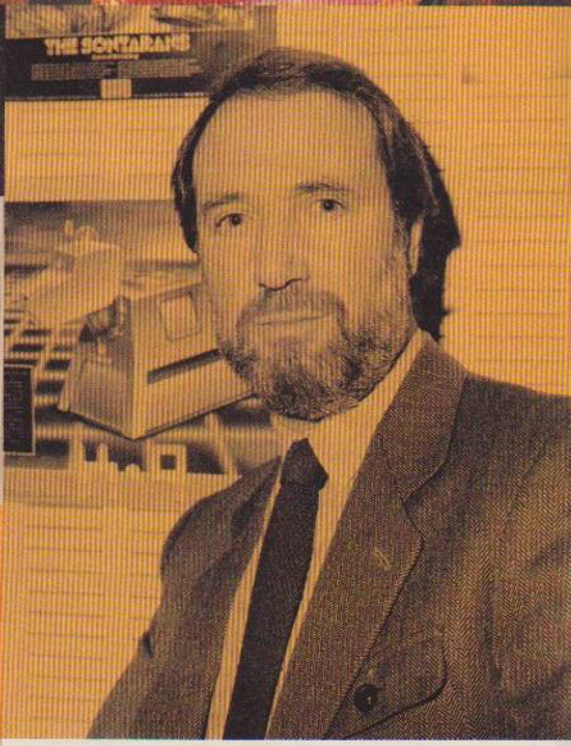
Let's take a look at Season Sixteen, the first full series of *Doctor Who* to go into production after *Star Wars* had premièred. There are hints of Lucas' influence throughout the season, particularly in the Ruritanian technofantasy worlds of Ribos and Tara, the design aesthetic of *The Pirate Planet* and the interplanetary war of *The Armageddon Factor*. There's K9, introduced the previous year in what looks like an obvious nod to the droids C-3PO and R2-D2 (though in a story made a month before *Star Wars* struck). Most obviously there's the 'umbrella theme' (or 'story arc' as it would become known) driven by the opposition of the Black and White Guardians, equally balanced forces of light and darkness, with the Doctor as the agent of light. It's the Force, of course, just filtered through different cultural contexts. Lucas' vision is rooted in Californian New Age mysticism, a *Reader's Digest* take on Carlos Castaneda. For Graham Williams, the Guardians are typically British anthropomorphic personifications, the opening scene of *The Ribos Operation* demonstrating that 'God' is an Englishman.

Unfortunately, it's all coincidence. Though the notion of dark and light sides to the Force had cropped up in *Star Wars*' early drafts, they're barely mentioned in the finished film and not really explored until *The Empire Strikes Back*, by which time the quest for the Key to Time was long over. *Doctor Who* and *Star Wars* were just reflecting the same cultural currents – 1977 was, after all, the birth year of the modern fantasy genre, kicked off with the first publication of Tolkien-chasing doorstops like *The Sword of Shanarra* and *The Chronicles of Thomas Covenant*. (David Whitaker's novelisation of *The Crusade* would even be picked on by Umberto Eco as an unlikely example of this trend for neo-medievalism!). The quest imagery and dark-and-light gods of the Key to Time season were becoming common currency. The real clincher for the non-influence of *Star Wars* on the Guardians is the fact that Graham Williams created them in the autumn *before* the film first appeared.

Williams was doomed to be disappointed with *Doctor Who*. He had the ill fortune to become producer at exactly the wrong time; when Tom Baker was at the height of his powers and uncontrollable; as the newly-organised fandom had learned the art of hectoring from the NVALA; during a row over violent content in which the BBC; and at the point when the period's inflation and industrial action seriously began to cut into the production team's capacity to do their jobs. He suffered the specific snub of having his final story, *Shada*, abandoned midway through production and later returned to the series as a writer only to see his script, *The Nightmare Fair*, culled in the 1985 hiatus. Such disillusionment seems to have been his typical experience of television, which he eventually gave up in the mid-1980s. Photographs of the man during the last years of his life show someone not exactly *scarred* by his experiences but wearily relieved to be out of *that* game.

All *Doctor Who* producers fought and lost battles and, despite setbacks, Williams succeeded superbly with his quintessential task – to make good, entertaining stories that kept audiences watching. But he had wider ambitions. With the Key to Time season he brought the idea of an intentional story arc to the show for the first time. Not that he was daft enough to want to mess with the series' winning formula at this point – the quest format was loose enough to absorb any typical *Who* story with minimal rewrites. So when Ted Lewis, the prospective writer of the season's only lost story, turned up at the BBC drunk and with an unworkable first episode, it wouldn't have caused any more disruption than usual. It wasn't the mechanics of *Doctor Who* that were at stake now, it was the *philosophy*. Describing his theme, Williams came up with a three-page document full of dodgy physics and equally dubious metaphysics describing the balance of the universe, a 'pyramidical hierarchy stretch[ing] through Time and Space' and 'a yet higher authority' to which the Time Lords must answer. It's only towards the end of the article that Williams tied this in with the series' practicalities: 'The Doctor will be seen to have six independent ventures, each linked by the common theme ... Those who wish to join him in episode one and follow him through to episode twenty-six will gain the momentum and bonus of following the story through. Those who choose to watch only one venture will enjoy it for its own sake – the scope in each venture is as wide and as free-ranging as ever – but should be encouraged as far as possible to see what happens next.' This could well be the best description of a story arc – *Doctor Who*-style – ever committed to paper.

GRAHAM WILLIAMS HAD LATCHED ONTO TIME LORD MYTHOLOGY, AND THROUGHOUT HIS TENURE AS PRODUCER HE WAS TRYING TO STRUCTURE IT AND DEVELOP IT FURTHER...



ABOVE: The Time Lords of 'The Invasion of Time' took their lead from 1976's 'The Deadly Assassin'. **RIGHT:** Season Sixteen script editor Anthony Read. **FAR RIGHT:** The Black Guardian was part of an attempt to introduce a new mythological race. **BELOW:** Time Lords of 'Deadly Assassin' vintage.

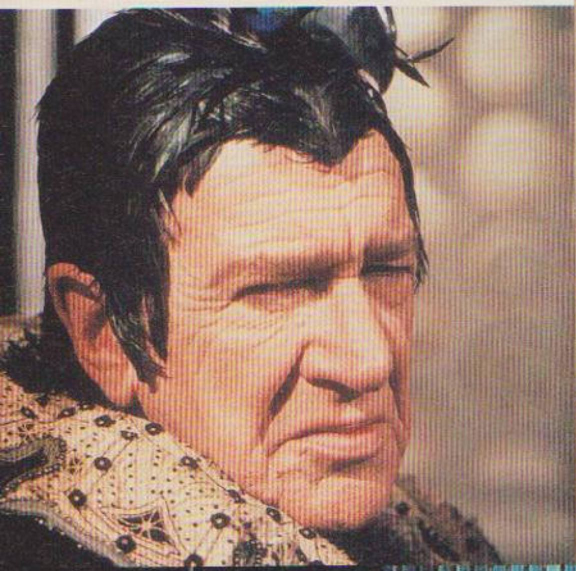
But Williams' proposal isn't about Season Sixteen. When he wrote it he wasn't even the series' producer. It was the successful pitch that landed him the job and it actually describes what he planned for Season *Fifteen*. This tells us two things: First, that from the start Williams was thinking about reshaping the cosmology of the *Doctor Who* universe; Second, that something went wrong. While the Key to Time may have gone ahead comparatively smoothly, it followed a year in which Williams' speculative pre-planning was comprehensively dismantled by factors beyond his control.

Having taken over the production of *Doctor Who* in January 1977, Williams and his inherited script editor Robert Holmes commissioned their first story of the new season from Terrance Dicks. This was *The Witch Lords* (latterly *The Vampire Mutation*), which would also kick off the overall Key to Time story with a tale of vampires liberally inspired by *Dracula*. This was soon dropped from the line-up but unlike most abandoned stories it was nobbled by internal politics rather than any inherent unsuitability. The BBC had objected to a *Dracula*-themed *Doctor Who* for fear that it might look like a parody of a planned prestigious adaptation of Bram Stoker's novel for broadcast over Christmas 1977. There doesn't seem to be any question that *The Vampire Mutation* was unworkable; both Dicks and director Paddy Russell felt that it was a better story than its replacement, *Horror of Fang Rock*; and it eventually emerged in revised form in 1980 as *State of Decay*. Its loss alone may not have been enough to postpone the Key to Time for a year, but various other factors conspired to keep the umbrella season temporarily closed: some storylines had already been worked out in detail with Robert Holmes before Williams arrived and Holmes planned to leave the series during the year; there was uncertainty over whether Louise Jameson – whose professional relationship with Tom Baker was rapidly deteriorating – would remain as Leela; and then there was the sudden interpolation of a robot dog as an ongoing series character, prompting any number of changes and line-up-juggling to accommodate this unlikely and frequently impractical newcomer. So Season Fifteen ended up as a year of transition in which, paradoxically, nothing changed. The postponed theme could always be incorporated into the next season and Williams could still play with the series' existing mythology before conjuring the Guardians into being.

In the meantime, Williams brought in Anthony Read to replace Holmes and this led indirectly to David Weir being commissioned to write for the new season. Weir was a reliable writer from *The Troubleshooters*; he had experience of science fiction with Gerry Anderson's *Space: 1999*; and he had a grasp of morally complex themes that Read believed would translate well into *Doctor Who*; he should have been a safe pair of hands for the season's finale, a Gallifrey-bound story that started out as *Killers of the Dark*, before becoming *The Killer Cats of Geng Singh* – or something similar. It seems specially appropriate to this story that no one is entirely sure how it should be spelled.

It was Graham Williams who wanted to do another Gallifrey story; he seems to have liked the Time Lords. He liked *The Deadly Assassin*, an unremarkable opinion now but very controversial at the time. The fans had voted it the worst story of Season Fourteen and published reviews vociferously attacking its 'betrayal' of the Time Lords. The BBC practically disowned it, physically vandalising the master tape to placate Mary Whitehouse. Williams himself had been briefed to steer *Doctor Who* away from its violent excesses. In spite of its reputation, he felt highly enough of it to schedule another Gallifrey story and to seek Robert Holmes' permission to reuse the character of Borusa. Elsewhere, Season Fifteen is full of references to the Time Lords and their lore. Prior to 1977 the Doctor and the Master were effectively the only Time Lords who really mattered and *The Brain of Morbius* was a unique exception to suggest a relationship between the Time Lords and the rest of the universe that was independent of the Doctor's activities. Suddenly, Season Fifteen offers *Image of the Fendahl* and *Underworld*, full of allusions to Time Lord history and foreign policy, while *The Vampire Mutation* – if *State of Decay* is any indicator – would have done the same. *Underworld* equates the Doctor's people with the Olympian gods of Greek mythology. Season Sixteen, when it came, would give the Doctor a Time Lord companion. Williams had latched onto Time Lord history and was trying to structure it and develop it further. Williams, in short, was a mythologist. The addition of the Guardians and then the Killer Cats – who would be an alternative native species of Gallifrey – were his attempts to open up the series' mythology further and fill the Doctor's universe with new and wonderful things. His proposal of November 1976 is arguably the first time that a producer had concerned himself with the *cosmology* of the series rather than with the character of the Doctor.

In the 1960s, *Doctor Who* had no real cosmology. There was the Doctor, his companions and his TARDIS. The series was an ongoing 'adventure in space and time,' unfolding through a linear progression of discrete, unrelated stories. Continuity was carried entirely by the regular characters on their journeys through each new serial. No one ever needed to create the impression that all these adventures happened in the same universe or had to be reconciled with one another. Human history provided a kind of rigid timeline for the series so long as the Doctor visited Earth's past but even stories with recurring monsters like the Daleks or the Cybermen only required a kind of broadbrush consistency with one another.



The War Games changed that by inventing the Time Lords. It was a story designed to impose order on *Doctor Who*'s universe, to limit it and make it internally consistent. This was a quite deliberate move on the part of producers Peter Bryant and Derrick Sherwin – but the cosmology they intended to create had nothing to do with the Doctor's past. The Time Lords were unintentional, a throwaway consequence rather than the *point* of their revamp. Bryant and Sherwin had wanted to limit the Doctor to a life on Earth and dreamt up the Time Lords as a convenient mechanism to put him there. Unlike Williams, who actually seems to have responded to the series' mythology for creativity's sake, they were doing it for practical reasons. They wanted to balance the budget.

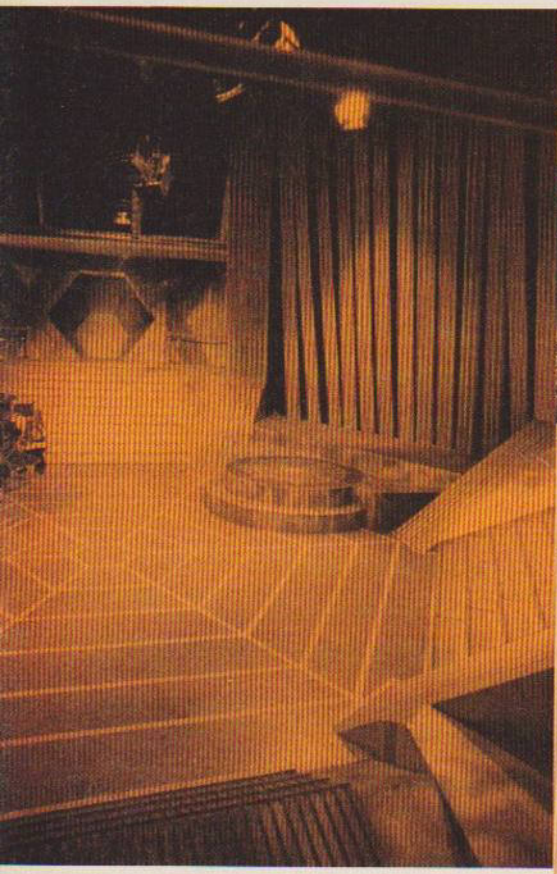
By the late 1960s, *Doctor Who* had become a very expensive series to produce. The costs published in *The Second Doctor Handbook* reveal that only a handful of Patrick Troughton serials came in under budget. Some had over-spent by thousands of pounds, petty cash today but wildly extravagant in an era when each story was expected to cost a low five-figure sum. The naysayers who had opposed the series' development in 1963, must have been delighted that the worst of their predictions – that this new science fiction series was going to bankrupt the BBC – seemed about to come true! It was typically the first episode of each new story, bearing the brunt of design costs and introducing large new supporting casts, that offended most against the BBC's accountancy, and with multiple serials in different locations each year, the very flexibility that kept *Doctor Who* fresh and exciting as a story was also threatening to strangle it as a corporate product. In a classic diseconomy of scale, the series was becoming a victim of its own success – while it continued to be produced to the format established in 1963 it would continue to run up huge over-spends.

An obvious response was to cut down on the number of serials per season. The four-part stories, which had become close to a standard under the producerships of John Wiles and Innes Lloyd, were displaced by a glut of six-parters from 1967 onwards. Season Six experimented with even longer stories, no doubt encouraged by the terrible script blight of 1968 that reduced what seem like dozens of commissioned proposals to unusable pulp. Season Seven added expensive colour requirements to the budget and suddenly seven-parters were the norm, with a mere four serials sprawling across a suddenly much shorter six-month season. Simultaneously the pressure on cast and production team at having to produce a new episode of *Doctor Who* once a week every week was eased by what was essentially a cost-cutting exercise. The changes were rewarded handsomely with a decade's worth of security and success.

At the time, that outcome wasn't so certain, and other ways were being sought to streamline the series. For Derrick Sherwin, who seems to have been the prime mover behind the creation of UNIT, the transition to an Earthbound format was an obvious one. Anchoring *Doctor Who* permanently to twentieth century Earth would also have anchored the budget, providing the opportunity for cheaper recurring sets while also keeping the Doctor away from strange new expensive worlds. It would bring the series into line with the contemporary trends in action-adventure television, with series like *The Avengers* and *Department S* proving that – despite Malcolm Hulke's famous complaint that the series had been whittled down to two plots – a contemporary setting was no barrier to telling extravagant fantasy stories. Maybe it even seemed like a natural evolution of the series, with prototypical contemporary adventures first appearing just as the historicals were being squeezed out.

The War Machines had gone over-budget; so had *The Faceless Ones*, the next story set on present day Earth; but the one after that, *The Web of Fear*, had come in more than £1,400 in the black. The serial hinted at the kind of semi-military format that might support an Earthbound *Doctor Who* and also offered a rich and interesting supporting cast that could be served up, *Blue Peter*-like, as something they'd made earlier. It was unfortunate that the writers had already fallen out with the production team over merchandising rights to the Quarks and were busily threatening to take out a high-court injunction to prevent *The Dominators* from ever being broadcast (perhaps this was a sly effort to inflate the potential value of the Quarks by preventing anyone from actually seeing them in action). However, the serial's director, Douglas Camfield, not only liked *Doctor Who* but seems to have collaborated closely with Sherwin in developing both the new format and, in *The Invasion*, its 'pilot serial'.

In fact the creation of the UNIT format seems to have been a rare example of *Doctor Who* being pre-planned thoroughly, in detail and carefully enough to overcome the various obstacles that might have scuppered it – from the Quark copyright dispute right through to the industrial action that robbed the first story of the new format, *Spearhead from Space*, of its studio recording dates. Compared to the behind-the-scenes shambles of 1986's *The Trial of a Time Lord* (where, in spite of an extra year's worth of preparation time, the scripts were still in dispute after the season had gone into production), the development of UNIT looks meticulous, disciplined and flexible. The format may have lost Anne Travers and her father (to avoid irritating their creators) and Driver Evans (to avoid irritating the Welsh) but their roles could soon be replaced – by ad hoc characters (Isobel and Professor Watkins), by new regulars (Liz Shaw), and by a mixture of both (Benton). Most importantly, Nicholas Courtney was secured to return as Lethbridge-Stewart, maintaining an essential piece of continuity in what might otherwise be a shocking transition. There was nothing accidental about the creation of UNIT.



Of course, there'd have to be some sort of plausible reason to have the Doctor stranded on Earth in the first place, some sort of plot device that could be sprung at the end of Season Six, but that was an afterthought. One story describes a meeting of the production team – Peter Bryant, Sherwin and script editor Terrance Dicks – called to discuss this problem. The topic of conversation turns to the Doctor's mystery background and whether that might provide a solution. Off-the-cuff, Sherwin pipes up with something he remembers hearing or reading about in the series' history. Wasn't the Doctor supposed to be one of a race of all-powerful 'Time Lords' who watch over the universe but never interfere? Isn't that something that's already been part of the series? Couldn't *they* nobble the Doctor for us? This story has a ring of convention anecdote to it but it's fair to say that the Time Lords were an afterthought rather than the point of the revamp. They were nothing more than an elegant solution to the problem at hand.

Despite what Sherwin may have seen, until 1968/69 there was no real hint of the Time Lords in the documented, unspoken back story. The Doctor does have a past but it's shadowy and implicit. It's an absence defined by the Doctor, not an invented history that defines him. The Doctor must come from somewhere but it isn't terribly important where: Susan's pronouncement in 100,000 BC that she comes from 'another time, another world' was about as unambiguous as the series was prepared to get, and the occasional off-screen references to the 49th century are remarkably unhelpful as far as useable information goes. C E Webber perhaps came closest to describing proto-Time Lords in early draft format guides under the heading *The Second Secret of Dr. Who*: 'The authorities of his own (or some other future) time are not concerned merely with the theft of an obsolete machine; they are seriously concerned to prevent his monkeying with time' – though this comes with the proviso that his reactionary version of the Doctor is planning to 'destroy or nullify the future'. The BBC head of drama, Sydney Newman, gave the succinct response: 'Nuts!' and the second secret of our hero henceforth vanished into the vague catch-all suggestion that the Doctor was 'a refugee from a galactic war'.

Dennis Spooner, while writing *The Time Meddler* in 1965, consulted the production files about the Doctor's background but came up with no particular insight into the Doctor's shared background with the Monk or how the two might be related. A capsule description of the plot boils the story down to its essentials: 'Doctor Who meets another time traveller who opposes everything our Doctor stands for.' This idea of showcasing the Doctor's antithesis seems to have been an irresistible one. Sometime around 1964, William Hartnell had proposed a story called *The Son of Doctor Who*, in which the Doctor has to confront his own villainous son, who has his own TARDIS and who would also be played by Hartnell, making it an 'evil twin' story in all but name. Hartnell's idea is sometimes mocked but it describes in very straightforward terms the reasoning that would lead to the creation of the Monk, the Master, the Rani, the Valeyard and others – these are doppelganger villains who don't comment on the Doctor's past so much as his present. The difference between the Monk and the Master is that the Monk was created without a backstory, whereas the Master was entirely in context, the strange mutant love child of the UNIT format and Time Lord cosmology. In the later Pertwee years, Omega and the Hermit would be born not from a genuinely imagined history of Gallifrey but from archetypes of heroic fiction, lightly disguised by Time Lordly gowns. It was Robert Holmes, a man who loved archaic language, who actually named the Doctor's home planet, and though there's no evidence for this, I can't help but think the word he had in mind was *gallimaufry* – a muddle of different influences, a *stew*.

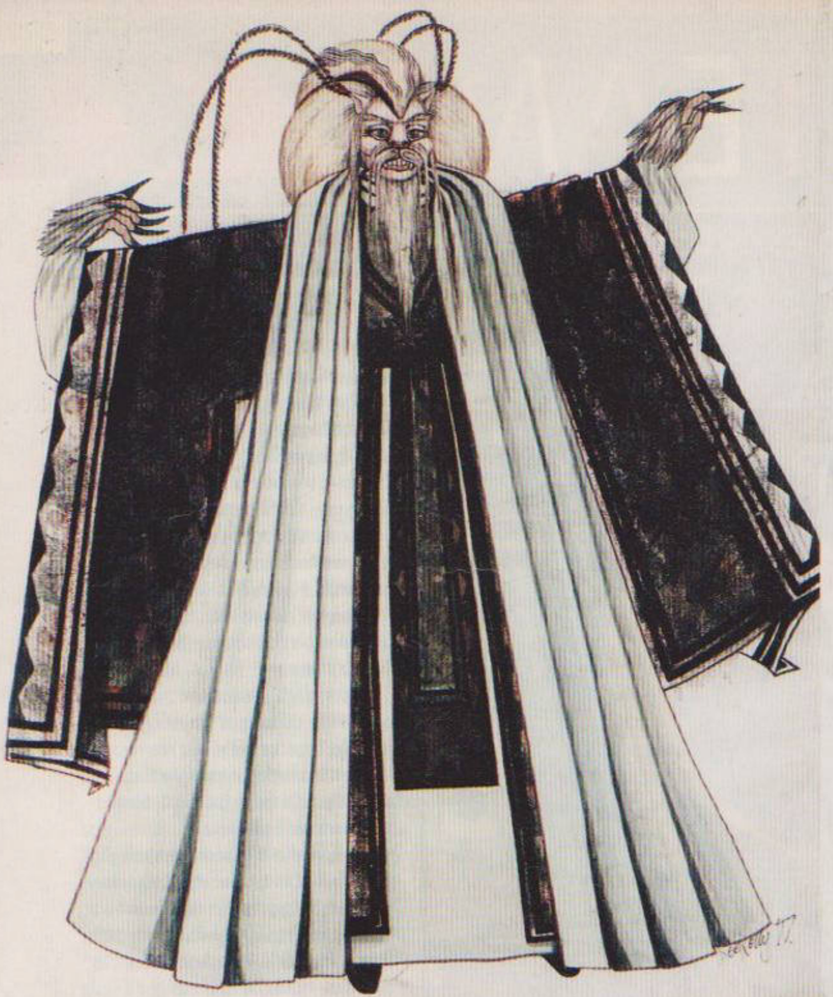
We learn next to nothing about the Time Lords between *The War Games* and *The Brain of Morbius*. This is because they're plot devices in quasi-human form. Even as late as *The Brain of Morbius* they exist mainly to be different from the Doctor, to define him better. The series' first producer, Verity Lambert, was disappointed by the UNIT format which showed the anti-authoritarian Doctor working for the Establishment, but this misses the subtler shading that the Doctor can work with UNIT precisely because he's still rejecting a bigger universal authority. The presence of the Time Lords allows him to remain a rebel, a class traitor and a drop-out. On a more prosaic level, they can also function as the narrative arm of the production team, moving the TARDIS around according to the dictates of the story. While exceptionally well-planned and executed, the UNIT format stumbled when Derrick Sherwin left and was replaced by a new producer, Barry Letts, who wanted to take the Doctor back out into time and space. The Time Lords re-appear as an excuse to get the Doctor on the move again, provisionally at first (from *Colony in Space* onwards) then permanently (*The Three Doctors*). They even manage to wangle him into plots that might otherwise seem coincidental and contrived (*Genesis of the Daleks*). To all intents and purposes, *The Deadly Assassin* is their first true appearance as an alien culture in their own right.

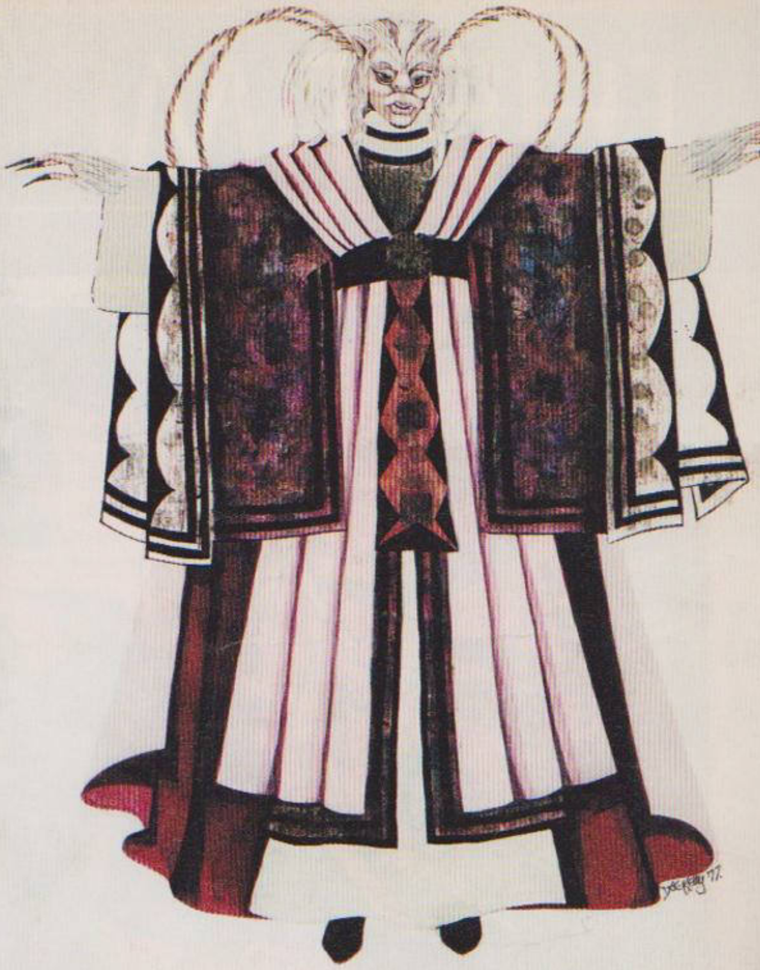
For early fandom, *The Deadly Assassin* was a continuity shock, offending against Gallifreyan history, but there was little there to contradict. The story's real crime seems to have been that it existed at all, bringing the Time Lords into focus and using them as the basis of a story, as if Gallifrey were just another planet like any other in the *Doctor Who* universe. With hindsight, this one serial defines the mythology of all the series to follow, whether on screen, the printed page, radio, stage, comic strips, audio, the web ... but at the time it was unique and Graham Williams seems to have been one of the earliest viewers to recognise that it was a success.

FAR LEFT: 'The Invasion of Time' cemented the Panopticon as Gallifrey's political hub. **LEFT:** 'The Invasion of Time' finally gave us the first glimpse of Gallifreyan life outside the Capitol. **TOP RIGHT:** Dee Robson's designs for the Killer Cats of Geng Singh. COURTESY DAVID J HOWE **RIGHT:** 1989's 'Survival' finally saw humanoid cats appear in the series.

Yet, ironically, *The Deadly Assassin* was designed to fail. It's probably the only example of a *Doctor Who* serial in any medium where the writer set out intentionally to write a story that didn't work. Robert Holmes wrote it to prove a point and he may have secretly enjoyed its storm-in-a-teacup reception by both fans and Mary Whitehouse alike. He must have felt vindicated: in 1976, the *Doctor Who* juggernaut was fuelled by the star power of Tom Baker, and the star was beginning to think that he could carry the show alone, without companions or assistants (and, unspokenly, without writers and producers and script editors as well!) *The Deadly Assassin* was Holmes' riposte, to demonstrate to Baker that the Doctor couldn't work alone, the series needed a companion, not a *star*, and that the actor needed to be reined in. But Holmes was too good a writer by this stage to mess up *Doctor Who* – even deliberately – and Tom emerged stronger than ever. And in the process, they had let Rassilon and the Eye of Harmony and the whole panoply of mythology and backstory into *Doctor Who*.

It didn't have to be this way. *The Deadly Assassin* could have remained a one-off, its vision of the Doctor's homeworld set at odds not just with the Gallifrey stories of the past but also those of the future. *The Killer Cats of Geng Singh* was the last chance





to slip the leash. Williams loved the Time Lords but he had a raft of other ideas he could have put into play, not least the frustratingly deferred Guardians who were clearly intended as a new rung of the series cosmology above and beyond the Time Lords. The premise of *Killer Cats* was also to counterpoint the Time Lords with another Gallifreyan species – a race of humanoid cats that delighted in bloodthirsty gladiatorial contests alongside a highly refined culture. This wasn't cribbing from *The Deadly Assassin*, this was building something new that would expand the newly-forged *mythology* of the series. In fact, with the cat-people on board and the Guardians waiting in the wings, the possibilities for Time Lord mythology were fluid. It might be possible to return to Gallifrey and find something new and exciting each time, different Gallifreys, with a mutable and ever-expanding history.

The Killer Cats of Geng Singh was never made. By all accounts, when the scripts arrived they were completely impractical for the series' purposes. David Weir wasn't the first writer – nor the last – whose assignment to *Doctor Who* had dazzled him into conjuring ideas wildly beyond the series' capacity to realise them. But it's his story that's provided a definitive image for this kind of reckless imagining: a scene set in a Wembley-sized arena, filled with 96,000 blood-thirsty cat-people, all presumably meant to be squeezed into Television Centre. Graham Williams and Anthony Read were aghast, Williams later describing his script editor "with his head in his hands, saying 'I don't understand it. How can he have done this to me?'" On top of that, the *Killer Cats* slot was going to coincide with the annual BBC strike – which had affected *Doctor Who* as far back as *Spearhead from Space* and would build up to frustrate Williams' ambitions in each of his three years as producer.

With *The Killer Cats of Geng Singh* in disarray and the strike looming, the BBC offered to abandon the final serial of the season and reallocate its budget for Season Sixteen. Determined to have a Gallifrey story, Williams refused this offer and sat down with Read to write a new set of scripts at short notice. For copyright reasons *The Invasion of Time* couldn't reuse any material that could be sourced back to Weir's scripts, so it's unsurprising that instead it recycles elements from *The Deadly Assassin* instead. That's not to say that it's a soulless rehash, but it doesn't really add anything new. Even the Outer Gallifreyan hippies aren't that surprising – viewers had, after all, been following the adventures of a drop-out since 1963. The Gallifrey of Season Fourteen is recreated with good faith, right down to rebuilding the Panopticon set from *The Deadly Assassin*. For all its pleasures as a story, the subtext of *The Invasion of Time* is that *The Deadly Assassin* was the real deal, that this is what the Time Lords *are*, and that things aren't going to change. The Guardians, when they finally appeared, would have to be grafted onto a mythology that was suddenly crystallised into a narrower vision of the Doctor's universe. The next time we saw Gallifrey it would be in *Arc of Infinity*, a story slavishly devoted to digging up continuity references with old characters doing their party pieces in the now familiar Time Lord fancy dress.

Arc of Infinity is set on a world where the back-story is regarded as at least as important as the front-story. The randomness with which the Time Lords had accreted in *Doctor Who* was starting to be held up as design. Even so, the process of fetishising Gallifrey as the be-all and end-all of the series had only just begun and it would take another ten years before it was complete, before a writer would try to rebuild the whole of *Doctor Who* based on the scraps we'd learned of the Time Lords since 1969. In 1994, in the 'bible' for the proposed American version of the series, John Leekley wrote: 'I am Cardinal Barusa... Time Lord of Gallifrey. This is my official insignia, and my personal glyph. Having transcended the confines of body, I exist now amidst the crystals of the Domed City of Gallifrey... I have decreed that my adventures with the Doctor and his flying ship... be written down by a scribe.' The cod-serious tone of this passage isn't too far removed from the one in which the young George Lucas wrote of Usby C J Thape and the Jedi-bendu of Opuchi. It describes *Doctor Who* remade as a dynastic struggle involving lost fathers and evil half-brothers, with an elaborate backstory thrust to the foreground. After almost 20 years, Leekley was remaking *Doctor Who* in the image of *Star Wars*.

It would be another 12 years after *The Killer Cats of Geng Singh*, before a production team worked up the nerve to attempt another *Doctor Who* story about humanoid cats. Perhaps appropriately, a scene discussing the Doctor's origins was cut from *Survival* shortly before it was broadcast ... DWM

THE UNMADE 'KILLER CATS OF GENG SINGH' WAS THE LAST CHANCE TO DO SOMETHING NEW WITH TIME LORD MYTHOLOGY...

TO BE CONCLUDED...

THE TIME TEAM

THEIR ONGOING MISSION: TO WATCH ALL 696 EPISODES OF **DOCTOR WHO**. IN ORDER. FROM THE START.

EPISODE 342 TO EPISODE 349

CLICHÉ COUNTER

Deaths on screen so far

00532

One or more regulars rendered unconscious

00090

One or more regulars incarcerated

00161

Compiled by
GARY GILLATT

Illustration by
ADRIAN SALMON

The galaxy is on the brink of war. The mighty empires of Earth and Draconia each blame the other for raids on their cargo ships. However, the Doctor, Jo, you, me and the Time Team know that these thefts have actually been faked by the evil Master, using Ogron slaves and a nifty hypnotic doohicky. The Master's reasons for doing this remain murky, but it's clear he is in the employ of some other, even more malign, force.

As we rejoin *Frontier in Space* for its penultimate instalment, the Doctor is on the planet Draconia, attempting to persuade the Emperor that the humans are not to blame for the theft of, well ... whatever important cargo the Draconians might want to ship. As they are lizards, one suspects it might be several hundred-weight of fruit flies.

"The scene in the Emperor's chamber has really been the highlight of the story so far," says Richard. "Hurrah for John Woodnutt as the Emperor. The man has a superb voice!"

"It's taken until Episode Five, but at last someone believes the Doctor," adds a relieved-sounding Peter. "Now perhaps the story can get going?"

But it's not as quite easy as that. Heading to Earth on a mission of peace, the Doctor's ship is raided by the Ogrons.

"Did you hear the Doctor then?" asks Peter. "'We've been boarded, we need the blasters.' He just loves shooting Ogrons, doesn't he?"

"Is this the Doctor's first ever gun battle?" ponders Jac.

"Nah!" chuckles Richard. "He was shooting Ogrons willy-nilly in *Day of the Daleks!*"

Jo is kidnapped by the Master, and taken to the Ogrons' unnamed home planet. For the sake of clarity, we shall call it Kenneth.

"Jo's certainly not afraid of the Master, is she?" says Pete. "They're almost chummy. And I think he respects her for it."

"I honestly think he'd like to take her on as his assistant," adds Clay. "Give Jo a week and he'd be donating his loot to charity and opening his TARDIS as a shelter for the homeless. He's crying out to be reformed. Can nobody *see?*"

For the moment, however, the Master is attempting to put the 'fluence on poor Miss Grant. But Jo's seen a bit of the universe by now, and won't fall for his 'You will obey me' schtick again ...

"Yay – character development!" enthuses Jac. "She's been hypnotised once, so she finds out how to prevent it happening again. Good for her!"

Episode Six is enlivened by the appearance of some more monsters. The first, a native of Kenneth, is a disturbingly scrotal apparition that puts the fear of God into the Ogrons.

"Actually, in the brief moments that we see it, the Ogron Eater looks quite acceptable," says Richard, to incomprehending looks from the team. "It's on screen so fleetingly, doing its strange alien rhumba, that you don't really have time to see whether it's bad or not."

"Oh, it's definitely bad," laughs Peter. "I want to see more of it! Let's see it munch an Ogron – that'll liven the story up."

Our second guest appearance comes from everyone's favourite denizens of Skaro. No, not the Magnodon ...

"Daleks! " shouts Peter, as the Master introduces his employers to the Doctor. "That's a turn up."

"Couldn't they have found a way to make that a cliffhanger?" says Clay. "It would've been one of the best ever! I can't believe they chucked it away like that, especially as this story isn't really blessed with much real excitement."

We learn that the Daleks have a mighty army stashed away somewhere, ready to subjugate the galaxy after the planned war between Earth and Draconia has run its course. The Daleks leave the Doctor in the care of the Master, before heading off again – it seems they popped in just because they were passing. The climax of this six-part adventure turns out to be a rather clumsy scuffle outside the TARDIS.

"What is the climax?" hisses Clay. "That the humans and the Draconians find the Ogron planet? What's that meant to prove? It all sort of dribbles to a halt, without bothering to properly resolve anything."

"I'm confused," groans Peter. "Why's the Doctor on the floor? Where has everybody gone?"

"It's such a sad exit for Roger Delgado," says Richard, with a sigh. "The end of the story gets messed up in production and so poor old Roger doesn't even get a decent last line."

"He'll be terribly missed," says Clay. "Especially now our Master 'shocks' have been rationed to one per season. What a brilliant actor ..."

"Oh yes," continues Richard. "I've nothing but praise for the man. He may have been a tad overused in the series, but he never gave anything other than his absolute best."

"Absolutely," agrees Jac. "The Master may have been a bit rubbish at times, but Delgado's performance never was."

"We haven't had a toast for a while have we?" says Peter, raising his wine glass. "To Roger!"

"To Roger!"

"It's a Terry Nation story!" shouts Peter, during the titles to *Planet of the Daleks*. "The first one in years! Another anniversary treat!"

"I think you mean 'threat'," replies Jac.

Ah yes, dear Terry – always adored by Jac. Last seen on the credits of *The Daleks' Master Plan*, he's come back for the second half of the Master's Dalek plan. Perhaps he'll only get out of bed for 12-parters?

"It's a nice idea to repeat the cliffhanger from the end of *Frontier*, as the Doctor sends his message to the Time Lords," says Richard. "It certainly helps give it a sense of continuity."

"There's been nothing like that since *The Invasion*," notes Peter.

As the Doctor's busybody relations shuttle his ship to wherever the Daleks are hiding their army, our hero collapses onto an advanced TARDIS sleep unit. (MFI, £79.99, mattress extra).

"It always upsets me when they spoil the TARDIS," says Clay. "Are we meant to think that the Doctor usually sleeps under white melamine? They had groovy 'space-beds' back in the 1960s, and it speaks volumes that they can now only be bothered to knock up a high street bedroom."

With the Doctor unconscious ("That's his fifth coma, you know," says Clay. "You'd think Jo would be used to them by now"), his plucky assistant decides to explore outside the ship. But first things first ...

"Jo shows how much she's worried about the Doctor by going off and getting changed, and doing her hair and make-up," says Jac. "Quite elaborately, too."

The girl is soon mixed up in a whole world of trouble. "Dangerous jungle plants?" ponders Peter. "And those familiar sound effects? We're

CLAY

JAC

PETER

RICHARD

back on Kembel! Or Mechanus!"

"I like the silly studio jungle," says Clay. "But there's a weird old-fashioned feeling to this whole set-up. Nation really hasn't been watching the show lately, has he?"

"What's this?" cackles Peter. "Invisible monsters? We're on Mira!"

Meanwhile, the Doctor has pulled himself together, changed his outfit, poofed up his hair and bumped into some other visitors to Terry Nation World – it's everyone's second favourite denizens of Skaro. No, not the Urvacryl, it's ...

"Thals!" shouts Peter. "And they've just mentioned Susan, Ian and Barbara! Now that's what I call continuity!"

But what is the secret of The Planet of the Daleks? The Doctor seems strangely befuddled. The clue, it must be said, is in the question.

"This episode is very oddly structured," says Richard. "We've seen the Daleks at the end of *Frontier*, we know the Doctor has gone off in hot pursuit – and yet there seems to be some desperate attempt to make the inhabitants of the planet a mystery."

The Daleks, the Thals reveal, are studying the natives of this planet – Spiridon – in an attempt to learn how to become invisible. Some of the details of this plan puzzle Richard.

"The Thals indicate that it takes tremendous power for a Dalek to stay invisible. So when the Dalek succumbs to light-wave sickness and dies, why doesn't it become visible?"

"Do you have the feeling that the script editor was on a long holiday?" asks Clay. "Of about 12 weeks, maybe?"

The Doctor and a Thal named Codal are taken captive by the Daleks. But if this Doctor is left alone in a prison cell for just a minute, you can guarantee that Moment of Charm alarm will soon be ringing.

"The Doctor's chat with Codal about his bravery is rather nice," says Richard. "It makes a point without being overly yukky."

"It's my fave moment of the story," agrees Jac. "Perhaps because it seems so genuine, rather than just put in for the sake of the Doctor having a speech. A lovely sentiment."

"Oh no!" groans Clay. "You're all robot replacements, aren't you? Or you've all been pricked by Varga thorns! Surely you can't *mean* that? His little tutorial on bravery is sick-making! Moment of charm? Moment of smarm, more like."

"It's all Ian Chesterton's fault, you know," says Jac. "If he hadn't manhandled Dyoni and stopped the Thals being pacificists ..."

By Episode Three – which exists only as a black-and-white telerecording – we learn that there are 10,000 Daleks stashed away on Spiridon, and the Thals are resolved to destroy them. If they're invisible, it'll mean a long search and a lot of stubbed toes.

"Doesn't this episode look just so different from the rest for being on film!" says Richard. "It doesn't seem to look half as tacky!"

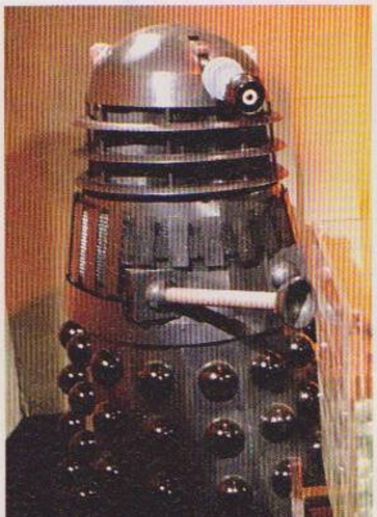
"It makes the whole thing a great deal more atmospheric," agrees Clay. "And since we're running on atmosphere alone in this episode, it's a godsend!"

Richard shakes his head. "I think there's a lovely exciting pace to this episode," he says, "with the Doctor escaping, finding the Thals and then getting pushed down and further into the base by the Daleks while trying to work out a means of getting out of the place. Good, exciting, *Doctor Who!*"

"Oh dear, I've found it a bit boring, actually" says Jac. "Although I do prefer it being in black and white – it's making me feel quite nostalgic."

"Maybe that's why I'm enjoying this more and more," replies Clay. "It's like it has been put together based on fading memories of watching *Doctor Who* as a child."

After finding that Spiridon has a core of 'liquid ice' – useful for fridges but the curse of figure-skaters – the Doctor soon discovers that the Dalek army is being held in suspended animation in a cave deep below the surface. Looking at the array of models, it seems that these Daleks have already conquered the key technologies of 'Tricky Action' and 'Bump'n'Go'.



"WHAT COULD BE LURKING ON THE PLANET OF THE DALEKS? WELL, DURR!"

"That army would fetch a fortune on E-bay," comments Peter, who knows that of the Pertwee Dalek stories so far, one was brought to us by Louis Marks, the other by Louis Marx.

Episode Four begins as the Doctor and his Thal friends escape up a vertical shaft using a make-shift hot-air balloon. The Team all agree that it's thrilling stuff.

"The Daleks have invented an anti-gravitational disk!" coos Jac.

"See!" says Clay. "It's all being written from memories of what the Daleks did in books and comics. Hurrah!"

Having escaped the Dalek base, the Thals start to make plans to go back into it again. This brings their leader, Taron, into conflict with his squeeze, Rebec. It seems there's nothing more likely to undermine a suicide mission than marital strife.

"Taron's reasoning as to why he doesn't want Rebec there is rather nicely played by the two actors," says Richard. "It could easily have been overly sentimental, but the nice interplay between Bernard Horsfall and Jane How seems to avoid this scene going too over the top."

"But isn't Taron saying that if the Daleks win, it'll be all Rebec's fault because he loves her, and that she shouldn't have come because that might cloud his judgement?" asks Clay. "Or am I just not getting the whole 'romance' thing?"

"The Time Lords haven't been much help, have they?" ponders Peter.

"Hold on," says Richard. "Having pushed two Daleks into the ice pool, we're told that the cold has killed them. So how come the 10,000 stored Daleks didn't all die when they were refrigerated?"

"You and Peter should be script editing this!" laughs Clay. "I think I might write to Terrance and ask for some money back ..."

With the Dalek taskforce on Spiridon needing some stronger leadership, someone is sent in from head office to sort out the mess. Meet the Supreme Dalek. He didn't get where he is today by not being able to give a Dalek taskforce on Spiridon some stronger leadership.

"It seems that the Supreme has been augmented with some of that superior Dalek technology," notes Richard, drily. "That torch for an eye must be useful on dark planets. Whoever is operating it is a bit naff though. He seems to be flashing the light very randomly."

"I want to know if Supreme Daleks are born or made," says Jac. "Are they specially assembled out of different colours, or are they elected on to the council and then sprayed? Is there a painting ceremony?"

In the end, the Doctor successfully detonates a bomb in the Dalek store room. This breaks down a wall of the cave and floods the chamber with liquid ice. The Dalek Supreme will be ladling for years. Finally, the Doctor warns Taron not to glamorise his adventures when he arrives back on Skaro.

"I know some people object to the Doctor's moralising here," says Richard, "but I think that this comes across really well and it allows the Doctor to make a strong point about the 'violence' we see during the course of the story."

"Keep back, Bignell!" groans Clay, making a cross with his fingers. "You're all in this together. That homily was even worse than the last one. Though his warning about not making this adventure sound too exciting raised a smile. I'd like to see him try!"

But when all is said and done, perhaps Taron won't be the only one to cast *Planet of the Daleks* in a better light than it may deserve. Even the Time Team, who have moaned and groaned about plotting, editing or presentation, are keen to make it clear how much they've secretly enjoyed the whole romp.

"It may well have been a reworking of some of Nation's earlier ideas, but I really enjoyed *Planet of the Daleks*," comments Richard. "Certainly far, far better than the boredom of *Frontier in Space!*"

"I'll agree with that," says Clay. "It's brainless and packed with bad dialogue, but all the fun of playing Daleks in the playground is up there on screen."

"Oh, I'll always love that story," says Peter, reaching for the wine bottle. "No matter how many times Terry Nation writes it ..."

AND YOU SAID...

FRONTIER IN SPACE

"Jo and the Master work so well together – weak scripts could make both a bit iffy, but scenes like Jo standing up to hypnotism and the 'fear box' make you realise how much you'll miss both of them."
Alex Wilcock, Isle of Dogs

"I still remember the thrill of seeing the Daleks at the end of the episode, probably the one time they weren't announced. To eight-year-old me it was deeply exciting!"
Guy Clapperton, London

"Terry Nation was always so sensitive about the Daleks being sent-up, yet here we have the Master clearly taking the mick out of them. It's a shame, because their initial appearance is very sinister."
Tim Gambrell, London

PLANET OF THE DALEKS

"Jo, it'd help if you took the cassette out of its case and put it in a tape recorder!"
Steven Manfred, USA

"Jon Pertwee changes his costume whilst gasping for oxygen and Katy Manning manages to get a haircut when on location. Is Spiridon actually Planet of the Wardrobe Designers and not of the Daleks after all?"
S Parker, via e-mail

"Codal says that all 600 Thal trainees volunteered for the mission. So how come they coudn't find anyone who could actually land a spacecraft?"
Jonathan Masters, Sussex

"Episode Two sees one of the most distressing scenes of the Pertwee era. The Doctor, totally deflated, believes Jo has been killed, is shot at by the Daleks and taken prisoner. He truly seems to be in a hopeless situation."
Mark Hugill, London

"This is the conlcusion to the epic that was set up in the previous six weeks? What happened to the Daleks' plan of using the Earth and Draconian Empires against each other? Pah!"
Andie Frankham, Colchester

In **DWM** 338 the Time Team will be back in medieval England for the final two parts of **The Time Warrior** before dealing with an **Invasion of the Dinosaurs**. Comments? Let us know at the usual address, or e-mail us at **dwm@panini.co.uk** (marked 'Time Team') by 7 November, ta.

THE SOUNDTRACK TO A GENERATION...

There are moments when I can't believe I'm being paid for this. I'm in the process of being shown round **BBC Audiobooks**' studios in Bath by the studio manager Kate Thomas. I'm also slavering at the mouth at the design, efficiency and well-equipped nature of the studios. "I think one of our actors is just breaking for lunch," says Kate, as a tall man with curly hair emerges from a booth. "Steven, this is David from **Doctor Who Magazine** ..." – and thus do I find myself shaking hands with **Blake's 7'**s Steven Pacey. I've had worse days ...

I'm here to speak to **Michael Stevens**, the man who co-ordinates BBC Audiobooks' series of **Doctor Who** releases. A much lower-profile "producer of Doctor Who" than, say, Gary Russell or Justin Richards, he nevertheless shares one trait with these gentlemen – he got involved in the whole thing because he is a massive fan of the show ...

WORDS: **DAVID DARLINGTON**

Michael Stevens

I've loved *Doctor Who* since the age of about three or four! As I was growing up I became a fan of the Target books, and recorded the show off the telly on my dad's reel-to-reel tape recorder, which now seems rather apt given my current line of work!

And apparently you wrote for DWM as well...
Indeed – I used to write fan fiction for fanzines such as *Skaro*, *Queen Bat* and some others now lost in the mists of time, and I did have a story in issue 173 of **DWM**, called *Pathfinders*.

And how did you get from scribbling fan fiction to the position you hold now?
By a circuitous route! I trained to be an actor, and did a lot of other things between that and joining BBC Radio Collection as a copywriter three years ago. I had an interest in a lot of TV and radio programmes, which was a help, although of course *Doctor Who* was one of my biggest interests. On my first day at Radio Collection, I was given the sleeves of *Slipback* and *The Myth Makers* to copy edit. A fanboy's dream! It was quickly realised that if a *Doctor Who* question came up, I could deal with it. As it's gone on, I've had more input into the editorial side of Radio Collection generally, and I'm now in the new role of Creative Writing Manager & Range Editor, *Doctor Who*.

So are you in charge of policy on *Doctor Who* releases – is it up to you what comes out and when?
Largely, yes. Previously Mark Ayres and former managing editor Piera Johnson worked out a schedule between them, now Mark and I do that. When it comes to anything other than the 'missing episode' releases, I'll take an idea along to our editorial meetings. Our publishing director, Jan Paterson, is very supportive of the *Doctor Who* range.

And what proportion of your job is it?
About a tenth, probably! This year has been especially busy *Who*-wise, partly because I took over managing the schedule, partly because of *Doctor Who at the BBC*, which I wrote and produced, and partly because of the 40th anniversary! Another dimension to my involvement with the series is writing the linking narrations. Sue Cowley [see **DWM** 292] had previously written all the scripts, but when I joined we had started to increase the amount of releases, and she wouldn't have been able to do four a year, so it was decided that we would handle half each.

Is that a job that's become easier with practice?
Not easier as such, it really depends on the story. Until the mid-1960s *Doctor Who* was very much radio with pictures, as was most television, and then writers latched onto the idea that they could do more visual things and introduce more action sequences. So scripting *The Celestial Toymaker* was easier than, say, *The Faceless Ones*. Sue has written previously about the difficulties with *The Web of Fear*, which I also noticed on *The Abominable Snowmen* – how many ways can you describe the way a Yeti lumbers along? The level of detail given by the script writer varies – *The Space Pirates* has lots of lovely description by Robert Holmes between the dialogue, whereas with *The Faceless Ones* sometimes I found it quite difficult to work out what was going on, as the stage directions were quite sparse. The scripts held by the BBC Written Archives are camera scripts – the script as translated for production by the director – so a lot of the more descriptive passages may have been taken out.

In January, BBC Audiobooks centralised its publishing and production with a move from London to Bath. To what extent is BBC Radio Collection the same company which issued *Genesis of the Daleks* on vinyl 24 years ago?
In the 1970s BBC Enterprises had a records and cassettes division, which is where *Genesis of the Daleks* would have originated. BBC Radio Collection was born in the late 1980s as a division of Enterprises, which was itself renamed BBC Worldwide in 1994. The catalogue has grown considerably since then! BBC Radio Collection is still in existence but has joined forces with two other audio publishing companies, Chivers and Cover To Cover, all of whom are now members of the same family: BBC Audiobooks, a limited company owned by BBC Worldwide. In essence we've expanded; as well as being the UK's leading spoken word publisher, we're also one of the biggest audio publishing companies in the world. Ideally, though, the Radio Collection fans won't have noticed any of these behind-the-scenes changes.

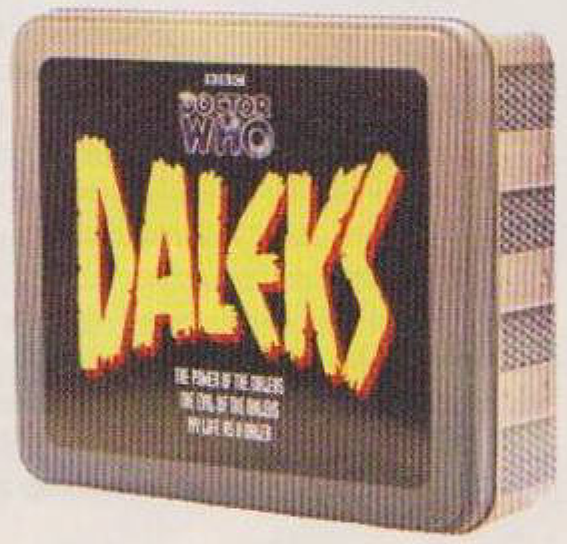
Post-*Genesis*, there had also been a short series of cassette releases of missing story soundtracks in the early 1990s. That seemed to stumble to a halt ...
I imagine it was similar to the *Hartnell Years* and *Troughton Years* video releases – all parts of the range driven by John Nathan-Turner, which came to an end in the mid 1990s. We went on to release a series of abridged readings of the Target novelisations, but it wasn't until about 1998 when the idea to reinvent the soundtrack range came about.

***The Massacre* was the relaunch release, and the only one to be made available on cassette. Since the series remains ongoing, presumably *The Massacre* was a success, but then you abandoned the cassette format. Was nobody buying them?**
We have, for a while now, had a policy of increasing our CD output. We foresee that in a couple of years CD will be the main format of choice for audiobooks as opposed to cassette – we have a lot of listeners who have always bought cassettes and feel very loyal towards them, but CD has so many benefits it's only sensible to move the business into that area. *Doctor Who* seemed like a natural choice for that, because the perceived listenership was younger, more attuned to CD than cassette listening.

BBC
DOCTOR WHO
YETI ATTACK!
THE ABOMINABLE SNOWMEN
THE WEB OF FEAR
TWO ORIGINAL BBC TELEVISION SOUNDTRACKS
BBC RADIO COLLECTION
DOCTOR WHO
RADIO COLLECTION
DOCTOR WHO
THE WEB OF FEAR
THE ORIGINAL BBC TELEVISION SOUNDTRACK

With *The Massacre*, you changed the approach to the narration – previously it had featured an actor who had played the Doctor, sometimes in character. Now it's always done by someone involved with the story as a third person narrator.
I feel very strongly that the job of the narration is to be an objective voice, explaining where explanation is needed, but it shouldn't add colour to the story. Those first-person narrations did intrude rather upon the action and the tone of the story. I've not met many fans of that style. Having said that, we do like to use one of the companions who was in the story, and I think that works.

A rather surprising new development at BBC Radio Collection has been the release of MP3 CDs. What was the reasoning behind this?
We are always keen to look at new publishing formats. We had the opportunity to do MP3 CDs, something no other audio publishing company in Britain had done, so we decided to dip our toe in the water. We've initially released six titles – two *Doctor Whos*, *Fawlty Towers*, *The Hitchhiker's Guide to the Galaxy*, *Dead Ringers* and *The Hobbit*. They've proved to be more successful than we expected, which is nice, and they got a lot of media attention. We're certainly considering more. *Hitchhiker's* was the most successful of the six, but the *Doctor Whos* have also been very popular.



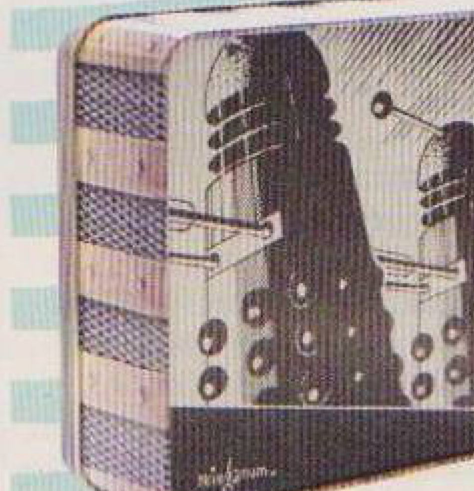
DOCTOR WHO
GENESIS OF THE DALEKS

Michael Stevens at his BBC Audiobooks lair in sunny Bath. Inset: the LP that started it all ...

This year you have also started issuing box sets such as *Yeti Attack!* and *Adventures in History* – is this particularly because it's anniversary year?
Yes. We've now got quite a library of releases, and there will always be people who haven't bought them all. It's really as a gift idea – we decided to bring out two box sets, make them look lovely, and they may appeal to someone who has a family member who quite likes *Doctor Who*, but hasn't collected the whole range. That said, I think quite a lot of people who *have* already got the stories will find the box sets tempting in their own right. The Dalek set has *Power* and *Evil*, plus the radio documentary *My Life As a Dalek*, in a staggeringly wonderful tin! It's decidedly Daleky, and completists can of course take the CDs out of the tin and put them on the shelf with the others if they wish. I think this will be very popular, because people have been waiting for these two stories in remastered form for a while.

The *Doctor Who* releases seem quite hard work – there is the need to procure fans' home recordings, have those cleaned up, write and record narration – is this a lot more work than a standard BBC Radio Collection release requires?
It is, and it's all thanks to Mark Ayres really. He knows the material so well and does such a good job with it. There are some other releases for which we will do that kind of work, such as the *Hancock's Half Hour* and *Round the Horne* collector's editions where an archive copy of an episode might not exist and so we've got someone's private copy and had that restored. But yes, on the whole with Radio Collection you're dealing with material coming straight from the archives, whether it be TV or radio. But *Doctor Who* is absolutely worth the investment – it's one of our most important ranges. It's got a very steady and loyal following.

Was that the spur for *Doctor Who at the BBC* – a reward for the loyal following?
There was the wish to do something a little bit special for the 40th anniversary, and I suddenly had the idea that there must be lots of stuff in the archive which has never been repeated and is probably not going to see the light of day *except* as part of a special programme. So it's a look back through the archive at the way *Doctor Who* was represented on the radio. There are two main components, the first of which is a history of *Doctor Who* first broadcast in 1993 and narrated by Nicholas Courtney. There are interviews with actors and production staff, and Nicholas takes you through the fortunes of the programme from 1963 to 1989. The second CD is something we've made ourselves, in which Elisabeth Sladen presents a range of excerpts from such programmes as *Today*, *The Ed Stewart Show*, *The Pete Murray Show*, even comedies like *Dead Ringers* and *WeekEnding*. It's amazing where *Doctor Who* has cropped up over the years! There are interviews with Terry Nation and Jon Pertwee, and a location report from *The Sontaran Experiment* featuring Tom Baker and Philip Hinchcliffe. *Today* has John Nathan-Turner and John Leeson talking about the demise of K9. One of my favourite bits is some vox pops of children in 1973 who'd



In studio with Elisabeth Sladen during recording for **Doctor Who at the BBC**. © Michael Stevens

entered a *Radio Times* story writing competition, talking about the stories they had written and *Doctor Who* in general. They're very charming and very funny! It's mainly drawn from the 1970s and 1980s, and there are some real gems.

How did you track all this stuff down?
I did a trawl through the archives – a case of putting in key words, actors names and so on, and going through the reams and reams of hits and ordering up the material, then just listening to it and seeing what was interesting and exciting.

Did you turn up more than you could ever have put out?
Yes, in the sense that we've only used extracts from longer programmes, so there is more material. I'm sure there's also more to be discovered. And we were fortunate to get a couple of off-air recordings of material which doesn't exist in the archive any more, one of which is the *Ed Stewart Show* from Longleat in 1983. Andrew Pixley has been enormously helpful on a consultancy level – his knowledge of the series and radio broadcasts in general is amazing.

BBC RADIO COLLECTION
DOCTOR WHO
THE MYTH MAKERS
THE ORIGINAL BBC TELEVISION SOUNDTRACK
BBC
DOCTOR WHO
ADVENTURES IN HISTORY
THE MYTH MAKERS
THE MASSACRE
THE HIGHLANDERS
THREE ORIGINAL BBC TELEVISION SOUNDTRACKS
DOCTOR WHO
THE MASSACRE
THE ORIGINAL BBC TELEVISION SOUNDTRACK
WHO
THE HIGHLANDERS
THE ORIGINAL BBC TELEVISION SOUNDTRACK

Given that, say, *Fawlty Towers* exists in parallel with the DVDs as a Radio Collection release, is there any thought being given to doing the same with *Doctor Who*, and issuing narrated soundtracks of stories which exist on video?
It may be a smaller market, but it's something we are thinking about, because of course the missing stories releases will one day come to an end. There are then a number of stories which only exist in part – such as *The Invasion* and *The Reign of Terror*. We do get letters asking us to release those stories, so we've material left for a couple of years yet.

If you looked in a BBC Enterprises catalogue from the 1970s, the programmes which were most popular on LP were *Round the Horne*, *The Goon Show*, *Hancock's Half Hour*, *Fawlty Towers*, and they remain to this day some of our bestselling releases. Listening offers a different experience to watching, and even though video and now DVD enable you to watch a lot of these episodes, there is still a market for listening in the car or when you're jogging or doing housework. There are lots of such places where audio comes into its own, and so a video release shouldn't preclude an audio release. So although *Fawlty Towers* is available on video and DVD, it's a popular audio buy as well.

***The Tomb of the Cybermen* was released on cassette not long after the VHS release – did that give any indication of whether the idea would work?**
Tomb actually did quite well, about as well as the other releases at that time. We would have to look at each story on its merits, and pick the ones which would work best on audio. It's possible to envisage, say, that if someone has a lot of Season Five stories as Radio Collection releases, but not *The Ice Warriors* or maybe *Tomb of the Cybermen*, they might like to complete that season on CD.

The recording session gets underway. © Michael Stevens

When the CD Radio Collection series was launched in the late 1990s, it was at around the same time that the BBC started releasing music soundtracks to *Doctor Who* stories, and Big Finish began their range of original drama productions on CD. Has there ever been any concern over saturation of the market?
I think music is a different kettle of fish – although we're on the same format, we're not necessarily going to appeal to the same audience. And we're not just making the *Doctor Who* releases for *Doctor Who* fans – BBC Radio Collection has its own aficionados and people like to buy things across the whole range, of which *Doctor Who* is very much a part. It's important for us not to fall into the trap of making things exclusively for fans, although of course they are the main purchasers. Your Radio Collection customer may be looking at one title in the range and their eye will then be drawn to something else. If it's a *Doctor Who* title they might think, 'Oh, I used to like *Doctor Who*, maybe I'll try one of those …'

Mark Ayres

Long-term fans of *Doctor Who* on TV will know the name of Mark Ayres from his three distinctive incidental music scores from the Sylvester McCoy era. For the last five years or so, however, his name has been more familiar as a remastering engineer on both audio and video releases of *Doctor Who* material. Just a few days before recording William Russell's narrative voice-over for the forthcoming BBC Radio Collection release of *Marco Polo*, Mark showed me round his – also sickeningly well-equipped – studio, demonstrating the techniques used on his work and giving a sneak preview of some material as yet unreleased. I asked how a trained musician ended up spending his days removing hiss and distortion from other people's work …
I graduated from Keele University with an honours degree in Music and Electronics, and thought 'what I really now want to do is music – how do I do it?' I decided to get into television where I could, so I applied everywhere. One of the everywheres was TVam which was just starting up. It wasn't even on air at the time, this was in 1982. I got a job as a sound engineer there, and spent six months wearing a hard hat, carrying a soldering iron, helping to build the station! After about five years, there was a bit of union hassle and we all got the sack. But I'd been making contacts, and started doing the *Myth Makers* interview tapes and corporate videos in my spare time, so I walked straight into *Doctor Who* – John [Nathan-Turner, producer] immediately said 'come and work for me', so it was kind of fortuitous.

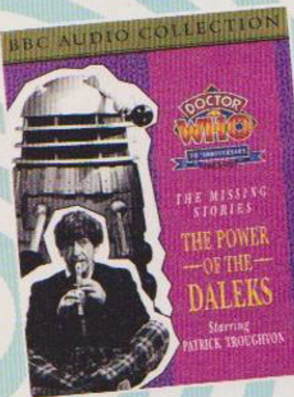
Having done *Doctor Who* on TV, I was then in the right place at the right time on a number of occasions. We did the extended video of *The Curse of Fenric* in 1991, and I got known at BBC Worldwide through that. When they put out the original audio collection *Missing Stories* releases, I was disappointed because I knew they could be done better. I knew they hadn't used the best tapes, and hadn't taken advantage of the technology that was available to do them properly. I wrote to Worldwide and said 'I can't say I'll be cheaper than the people you're using, but I know I'll be better, can we talk?' and I got a letter back saying 'No, we're perfectly happy with the product'. But then Stephen Cole took over as head of all things *Doctor Who*. He wanted to put out *The Massacre*, and he rang me and said 'you've been saying you can do better, prove it', so I did. That then led into doing audio work on the DVDs and suchlike.

There had been a lengthy hiatus in *Doctor Who* soundtrack releases before *The Massacre* in 1999 – do you have any idea why that was?
Either *Power* or *Evil* had gone straight to the top of the Talking Books bestseller list, so they weren't selling badly, but I don't think they were particularly well received – buyers realised you couldn't understand what the hell was going on, they were pretty unlistenable. Most of the early recordings came from [former **DWM** writer] Richard Landen. I've known Richard for years and he was always slightly suspicious of the project, I think he only let the BBC have copies, not his original masters – and, with the best will in the world, Richard's aren't the best recordings available. There was also reticence at BBC Worldwide to credit or say thank-you to people, which I thought was bizarre – there

seemed to be a policy that 'we don't credit non-BBC people' which was petty. People supplying tapes aren't going to get any financial reward, the BBC isn't going to pay for copies of its own material, therefore I think it is only sheer courtesy to thank people, and we now do a 'thanks' on the sleeve and send them a copy of the disc. It's the least we can do, and it's *all* we can do.

BBC MP3-CD AUDIO
THE ORIGINAL TELEVISION DRAMA
DOCTOR WHO
THE DALEKS' MASTER PLAN
INCLUDES BONUS EPISODE: MISSION TO THE UNKNOWN

Also, there was some disagreement about how they were done editorially, in that on the Eric Saward ones there was a lot of editorialising and the stories were coloured by the narration. Also, maybe they felt that they'd done everything that was going to sell, and that the other recordings weren't as good. I always knew they hadn't used the best recordings and that there was a better way of doing the narration. Steve Cole and I had a long chat about that, and we decided to do it third person. He went away to write the script – though as I found out a bit later, Sue Cowley had written most of it – and it just worked. I went to record it with Peter Purves, and it was obvious that it worked much better than the previous releases. We did that one as a tester, on CD and cassette, and the idea was to let it sit for a year or so and see what the sales and the reaction were, and then Steve came back and said 'It sold, we're doing more'. By the time of *The Web of Fear*, Steve had left or was leaving, and I worked with a lady called Piera Johnson, who executive produced the releases. The great thing about these is that I just get on with them and deliver the masters, which is quite unusual – most of the time people like to know exactly what you're doing!



***The Daleks' Master Plan* included, as a bonus, all the episodes in MP3 format, bereft of narration. Was there ever any thought that the releases might not neeed narration at all? Some fans do crave such things ...**

You couldn't do them without narration, too much is missing. There are so many stories where there are long sections where nothing happens apart from the occasional shout, and you've got to explain that. Fans have the telesnaps and the *Archive* from **DWM**, maybe even the reconstructions and the novelisation, so they know the story backwards, but we have to make a mass market product. Without narration they would only work for fans, and our sales figures would not be what they are. The interesting thing about the MP3s on *Master Plan* is that I've had a lot of e-mails saying 'It's nice to have them, but thank God you've got the narration'. I'm sure one day all the un-narrated episodes will be available, but at the moment my job is to make a really good audio product which stands alone.

> "I was disappointed with the original **Missing Stories** releases because I knew they could be done better ..."

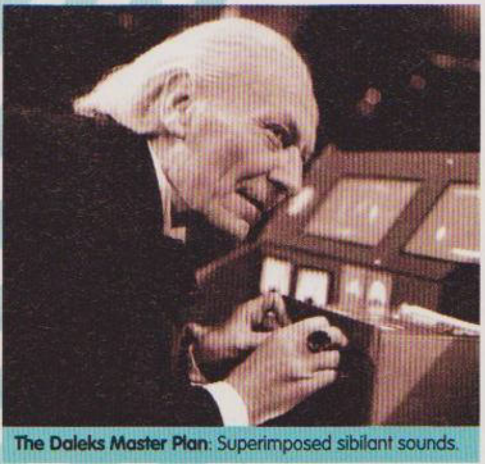
Audio wizard Mark Ayres in his hi-tech home studio. Mains hum not shown ...

When *The Macra Terror* was reissued, it incorporated the original Colin Baker narration from the cassette release – that policy seems now to have been abandoned, with new voiceovers on the two Troughton Dalek stories ...

It wasn't really a policy – what happened was that BBC Radio Collection wanted to re-release some old stuff to take some pressure off me. They said "we'll just clean them up and put them out," and I said "we won't, because we've set a higher standard for ourselves than that." If I was just to clean up the *Macra Terror* cassette master and put it out, we'd get complaints because the fans know there are better quality copies out there. And as an engineer and producer, I couldn't put that out knowing I could do a better job, so I said I would use the old narration on a newly cleaned-up version of the episodes. The problem was, nobody had kept the raw narration tape, only the mixed master. So I had to un-knit the narration from the cassette master and re-apply it to my new restored episodes.

They wanted to re-release one like that as an experiment, and that was fair enough, but I said "Next time let's start from scratch." I listened to *Power* and *Evil* – the soundtracks were bad, the technical quality of the cassette production wasn't great, and un-knitting the narration would have been difficult. They had also cut bits out, where we have a policy of not missing anything out – even if there's a long silence we'll leave it in because I don't want to be accused of cutting anything.

The Faceless Ones: Didn't know what was going on!



The Daleks Master Plan: Superimposed sibilant sounds.

Marco Polo: The mystery of the extra-long Episode 2!

Initially Sue wrote all the scripts, then Michael Stevens took some of the pressure off, and I think they're both happy about the arrangement – it's quite a job actually, writing one of those scripts. When John Nathan-Tuner was doing them, it had to be a Doctor doing the narration – John wanted 'the big star name', he was always Mr Showbiz. By the time of *The Massacre*, we felt that having Tom or Colin narrating, because they're such big performers, would distract from the story. And if we were to use a Doctor, we might feel compelled, psychologically, into letting them do it in character as it had previously been done. The companion voices are slightly less well known, slightly more anonymous within a *Doctor Who* context, so they are less distracting, and maybe easier to accept as 'third person'.

So *Power* and *Evil* will finally appear as nature intended?

Well almost. We hit a rights snag on *Evil* – there's a scene in Episode 1 in a café with Beatles music playing, which we cannot licence. It's not a case of 'How much?', it's 'No!'. So I've replaced the music, which was a technical *tour de force* using every trick I've learned in 25 years. It's very difficult – you have to remove as much as you can and disguise the rest, so I have to use a track which helps disguise what I haven't been able to remove.

Other than those *Evil* Beatles, have there been any particularly troublesome *Doctor Who* releases?

Some things are beyond help – bits of *Space Pirates* are dire and always will be, because the source recordings are terrible, and there's absolutely nothing more I could do with them. If the stuff's on the tape I'll get it, but there are occasions where the stuff *isn't* on the tape. If the high frequencies are attenuated I can bring them up, but there are some recordings where there are no high frequencies. If there are no Ss and Ts on a recording, I can't invent them ...

Mark Ayres and Elisabeth Sladen.

Didn't you do something terribly clever with missing sibilants on *The Daleks' Master Plan*, though?

There is a recording of the first episode, which I think was David Holman's, which was very bassy, but strangely enough it was the best recording. Then there's a recording of David Butler's which is far too bright and absolutely smothered in hum, you can't hear what was going on at all. I discovered that if I used an incredibly steep filter on that, I could remove the hum and be left with just the sibilant sounds, and with very careful synchronisation I could match it up with the other recording and end up with a recording where you could hear what was being said. I was very pleased with that – I can hear where it goes out of synch, it has a grainy quality to it, but I was having to resynchronise every couple of words, it took about a week to do and it was a bit of a nightmare of a job. What you have to remember about the source material is that these are off-air recordings made to quarter-inch tape. No quarter inch tape machine even today, except very expensive ones, run at exactly the speed they're supposed to – they're always plus or minus a few tenths of a percent, which is enough to put things out of synch very quickly. And in 40 years the tapes have shrunk, or stretched, or whatever.

On *Marco Polo*, for instance, the mains hum is quite prominent – I can filter it out, but before I filter it out I can run it through a frequency counter. Knowing that the mains hum *should* be exactly 50Hz means I can adjust the playback speed and pitch to give me 50Hz, so the episode should then be running at exactly the right speed. The problem is, it will drift over the course of the episode, and has to be adjusted dynamically. The second episode of *Marco Polo* is a long episode, it's down in the documentation as 26.34. My version is 27.10, and I can't work out why! There's possibly been a bit of misreporting of timings, and I may not have got the cliffhanger reprise exactly right because I've had to rebuild it – but life's too short to get very worked up about that.

And is it still a fulfilling job? Given that it's perhaps not exactly what you originally set out to do?

I've made a rod for my own back really, because I have kind of made myself indispensable, and for the last two or three years it's pretty much all I've done. I get offers to do music on straight-to-video or straight-to-CD projects, but the budgets on those mean that, as someone with a family, I couldn't afford it. Also, I've done that before, and I'm holding out for bigger things now. Music work is hard to come by, there are so many people wanting to do it, but it still comes in – I do the occasional documentary, and things like the *Sci-Fi Quarry* project [see **DWM** 317].

At one stage the BBC wanted more frequent releases. We're doing roughly one every three months, and a couple of years I was sent a draft schedule which had two a quarter – one every six weeks! They take about a month to do, and if I was doing that I would be doing nothing else. So I wrote an e-mail, saying 'I think four a year is as much as we can do without me completely going mad'. I have to track down the earliest copies I can of the recordings, do all the research, restore all the episodes, check the scripts, mark up the scripts, do the recording, do the mix, master the CD – it's quite a job, but it's one I thoroughly enjoy. DWM

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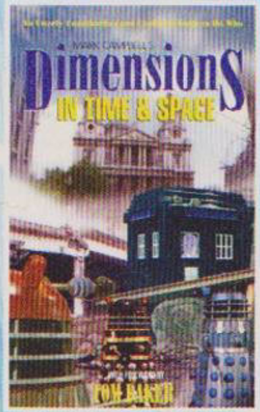

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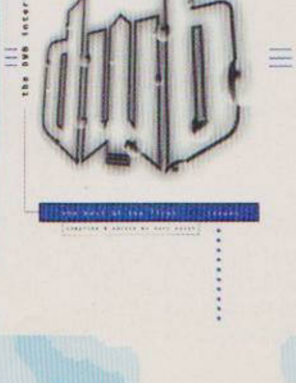

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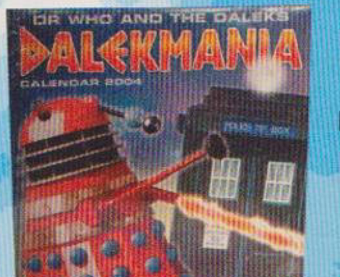

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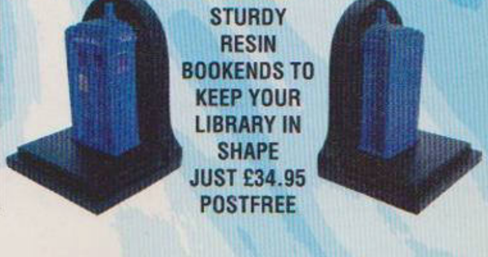

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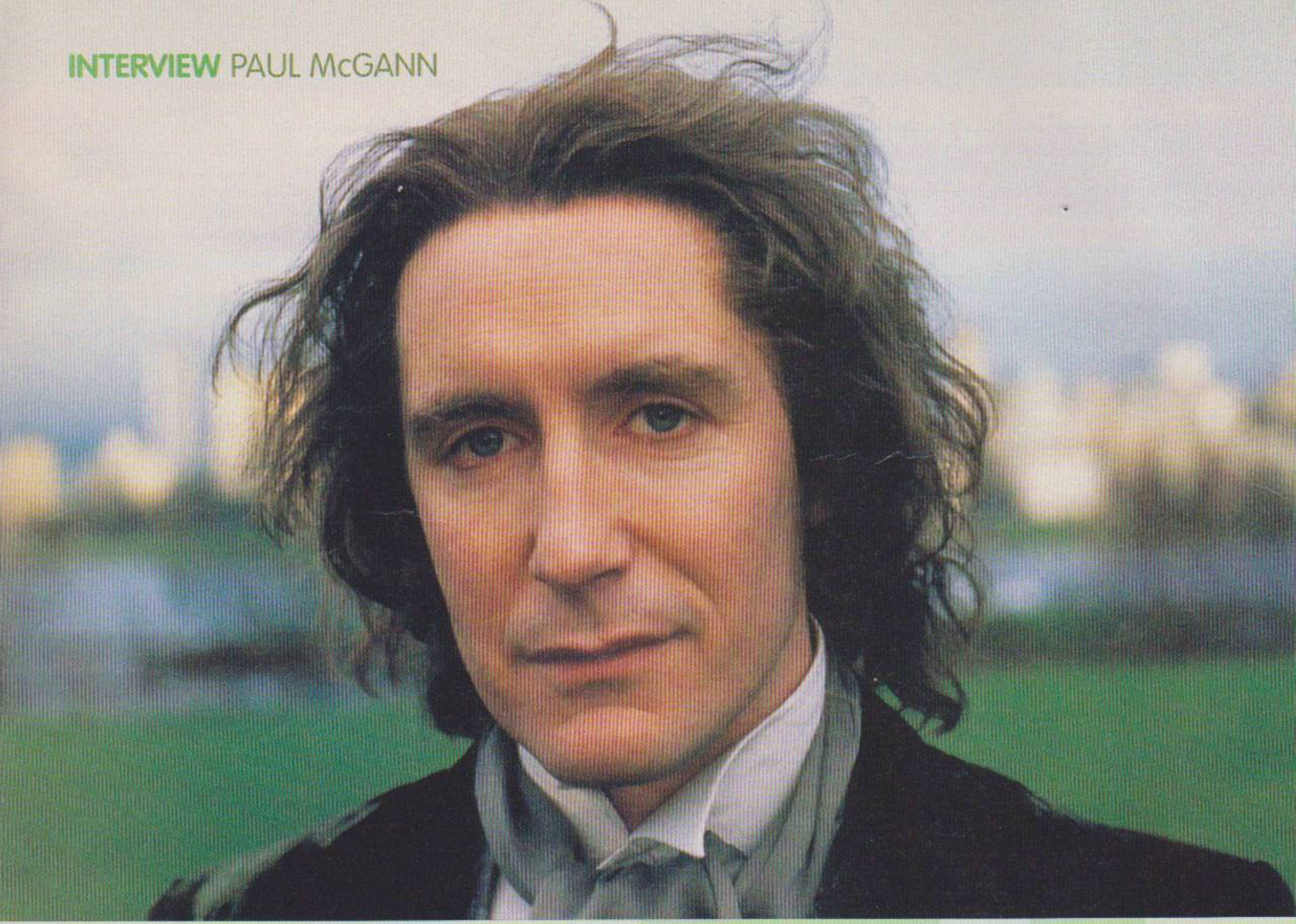
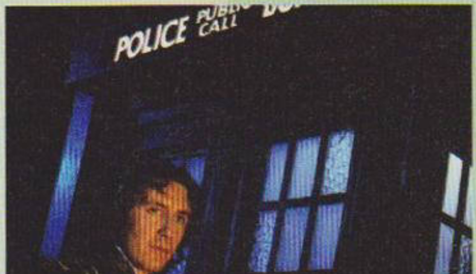


AFTER **EIGHT?**

He came back to life before your eyes. But now he's regenerated – and no one thought to tell him! **Benjamin Cook** caught up with **Paul McGann** to mourn the passing of the Eighth Doctor (yeah, right!) and pass judgement on his usurper ...

Actually, I'm namedropping, but I was talking to Richard E Grant the other day – "He did a *Doctor Who*, didn't he?" jumps in Paul McGann. "They're calling him the Ninth Doctor! He's official. He's in the loop." He stifles a laugh. I wasn't expecting that. "Was Richard in shock?" He made it clear, I tell him, that he *isn't* Doctor Who. "No?" He's just voicing the part. "Oh, does he think so?" Yes, he thinks so. "Well, *I* think," grins Paul McGann, cheekily, "that he's got quite a shock coming ..."

Having caught up with the Eighth Doctor actor in his hometown of Bristol, it's nice to find him in a particularly good – dare I say mischievous – mood. "It's funny," he says, "I didn't know, in fact. I didn't know at all, because I've not spoken to Richard for months. I must have missed it if somebody told me." How did he find out, then? "I was walking around London, and my agent called me – this is just a few weeks ago – and she said, 'Radio So-and-So want to talk to you ... like, now!' I said, 'I'm in Oxford Street! What about?' She said, 'About Richard.' 'Richard who?' I said. I hadn't the faintest idea what she was talking about. And then she told me – Richard is becoming the Ninth Doctor! I said, 'No, no, no – someone's having you on. You're crazy!' Anyway, so I rang home, cos I knew that my young son would be sitting at his computer. 'Get on the web,' I said. 'Find out ...' And he did, and he said, 'Oh wow, Dad, there's Richard!' And there he was – the bitch! It was on the BBC website. It said 'Hail the Ninth Doctor' or something. I thought, 'My God!' It was a complete surprise."



Paul McGann is keeping hold of his TARDIS key! © BBC

How does Paul feel about having regenerated, it appears, into his *Withnail and I* co-star? "I just think it's ... perhaps it's strange that he never mentioned it. I've still not had a conversation with him about it. I'm absolutely certain that he never mentioned it. The last I saw him was in March or April, because I was in the theatre and he came to see me. I knew that he'd dressed up as Doctor Who for ... was it *Children in Need?*" *Comic Relief*, in fact. "Yeah, they'd done some skit. It's funny what you say. If he imagines, as I think that he might, that he can just get on with things and not be Doctor Who ... Hah-hah! Watch this space, kid!"

Richard told me that Paul must be the sexiest man alive. I tell Paul this. It elicits a lengthy pause, and a wry smile. "He's a strange bloke," Paul mutters, eventually. People go down in skittles when they're around Paul, or so Richard said. "He is a strange bloke," says the actor, shaking his head – but looking pleased. "He's a flatterer. Hah-hah!"

Thanks to Big Finish, Paul McGann's reign as the Eighth Doctor is far from over. Does Paul see the show as always being part of his life. "Always?!" He looks worried. "Bloody hell! The rest of my life, you mean?" What I'm asking is does he see an end to his association with *Doctor Who*? "What, a divorce? If there was a divorce," he beams, "it would have to be by mutual consent. Well, wouldn't it? That's all I'm going to say on the matter. I don't wish to pre-empt this kind of spat. I wouldn't be an actor if I could see six months ahead. The minute you start thinking, 'Two years from now I'll be doing this, four years from now I'll be doing that,' it's over."

Does Paul like that way of living? "I'm used to it." But isn't it tough? "Of course it's tough." Especially when you have a family to support? "Absolutely, yeah. You don't know what's going to happen next – six weeks away, six *days* away – but you do get used to it, amazingly. People I know in, let's say, 'straight' employment find it insane. 'How can you live like that? How can you plan for anything?' Well, you can't. But the consolation is – the real consolation is – that you're doing the thing you wanted to do in the first place. Even when times are lean, that's a big consolation."

"They've cast who?!" McGann with audio assistant India Fisher © Big Finish Productions

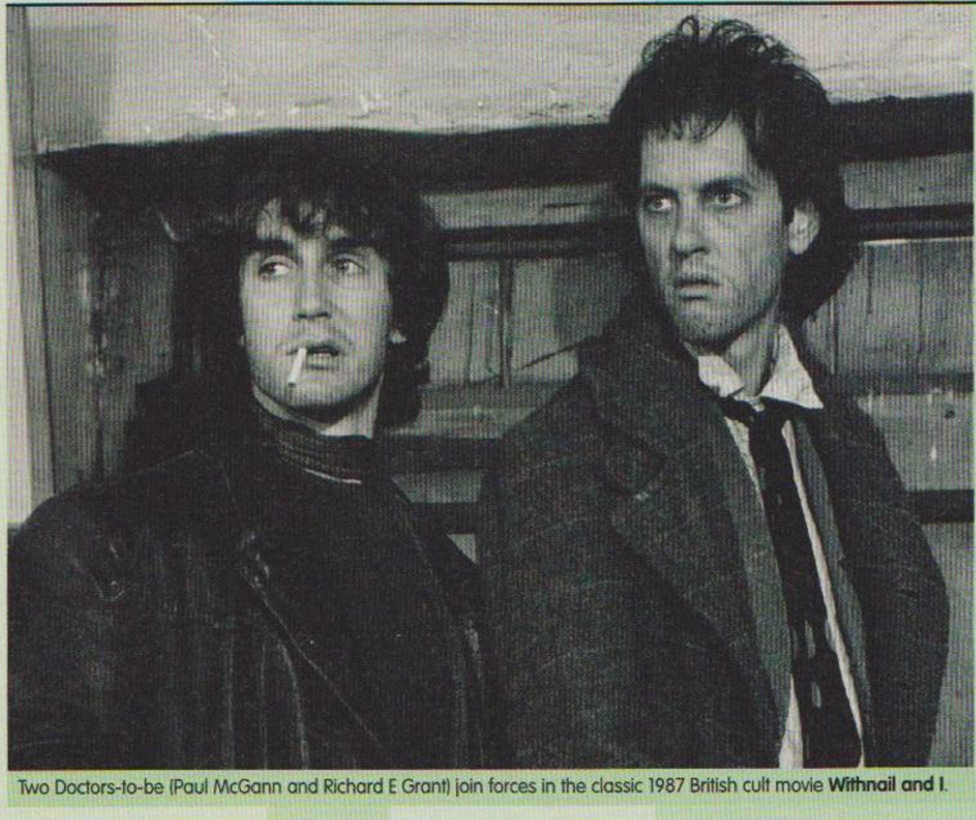
When I spoke to Richard, I asked him whether he ever tires of the *Withnail* association. I pose the same question to Paul. "Not at all," he says. "It's dear to me. I have pleasant memories associated with it. Happy memories. It's the job I'm proudest of – well, either that or *The Monacled Mutineer*, cos that was how I got the *Withnail* gig. In those days, to get a movie – which is what we all wanted to do, we all wanted to be movie stars – you had to be good in a big telly. That was the way you did it. They were both early jobs." He considers this. "Actually, because they were the first things that I did, really, I think they were the best things that I did, in many ways.

"Often," he continues, "you're better when you're working purely from instinct, rather than from, say, acquired tricks gained from experience. You understand?" Is that what Paul does nowadays, then – relies on acquired tricks? Doesn't that mean that he's sometimes just going through the motions? "It's unavoidable. It's like any other line of work. It has its compensations, because it means, perhaps, that your standard never drops below a certain level. You're actually employable. But I miss those days. I miss those days of knowing very little, funnily enough. I miss those days of just winging it completely. That was when I did the best work, I think, that I've ever done – I think, for that reason."

How easy does Paul find striking up working relationships with other actors? "The trick is to get rid of what would ordinarily be inhibitions and embarrassments – I mean social ones – and get straight in and friendly with people," he answers. "This, of course, is where that almost cartoonish stereotype of the 'luvvie darling' comes from, but it's something that you have to do. Time is short to ... well, get it on with people. You can't spend your time, as you would in a normal course of events, slowly getting to know somebody, developing trust, getting in with people. You just have to get on with it – and that's why, at the end of the day, everybody finds it so easy to say ta-ra and disappear off into the sunset."

"I GOT A CALL FROM MY AGENT TELLING ME THAT RICHARD E GRANT IS THE NEW DOCTOR. HE NEVER MENTIONED IT TO ME – THE BITCH!"

To forge good relationships that quickly, I put it to Paul, must take quite a confident person. Do all actors have to be confident and outgoing? "No, it's an act," he says without hesitation. "It's an act in itself. This explains, I guess, why shy personalities can be big performers. In a sense, to be a performer – a singer, a dancer, an actor – being cripplingly shy is actually no impediment. You can still go on a stage and dance or play King Lear. You just might not be able to open your mouth to speak in the bar afterwards. The whole thing, if you like, is as act for those that ordinarily find it difficult. Of course, actors are like anybody else – some actors are perfectly friendly and still absolutely able to be themselves."



Two Doctors-to-be (Paul McGann and Richard E Grant) join forces in the classic 1987 British cult movie **Withnail and I**.

Where would Paul put himself on that scale? How confident or shy a person is he? "I'm not really a luvvie, I don't think. I'm one of those quieter ones, the private ones ... I wouldn't say I was shy. I'm not really a shy person. But I wouldn't hang around with actors." If you didn't have to work with them? "Yeah, if I didn't have to work with them. That's true. That's why I live in Bristol," he laughs, "because there aren't any actors here! They all live in London."

That sort of private man, private actor, doesn't necessarily sit comfortably, I suggest, with the role of Doctor Who, which receives much interest from the press and the public. "It really has no bearing, though. One has to distinguish," Paul insists, "between the private person and the performer, and distinguish further between the performer and the character. They're all separate entities. It has no bearing whatsoever." He looks content. "So there! That's what I think." DWM

Don't miss next month's **DWM**, in which Paul and the other Doctors discuss Big Finish's 40th anniversary audio adventure, **Zagreus**.

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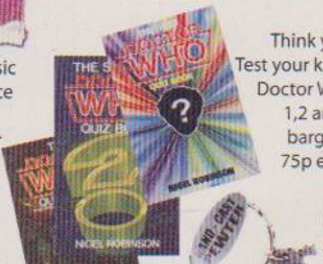

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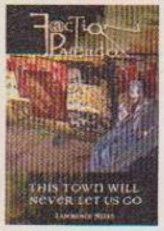

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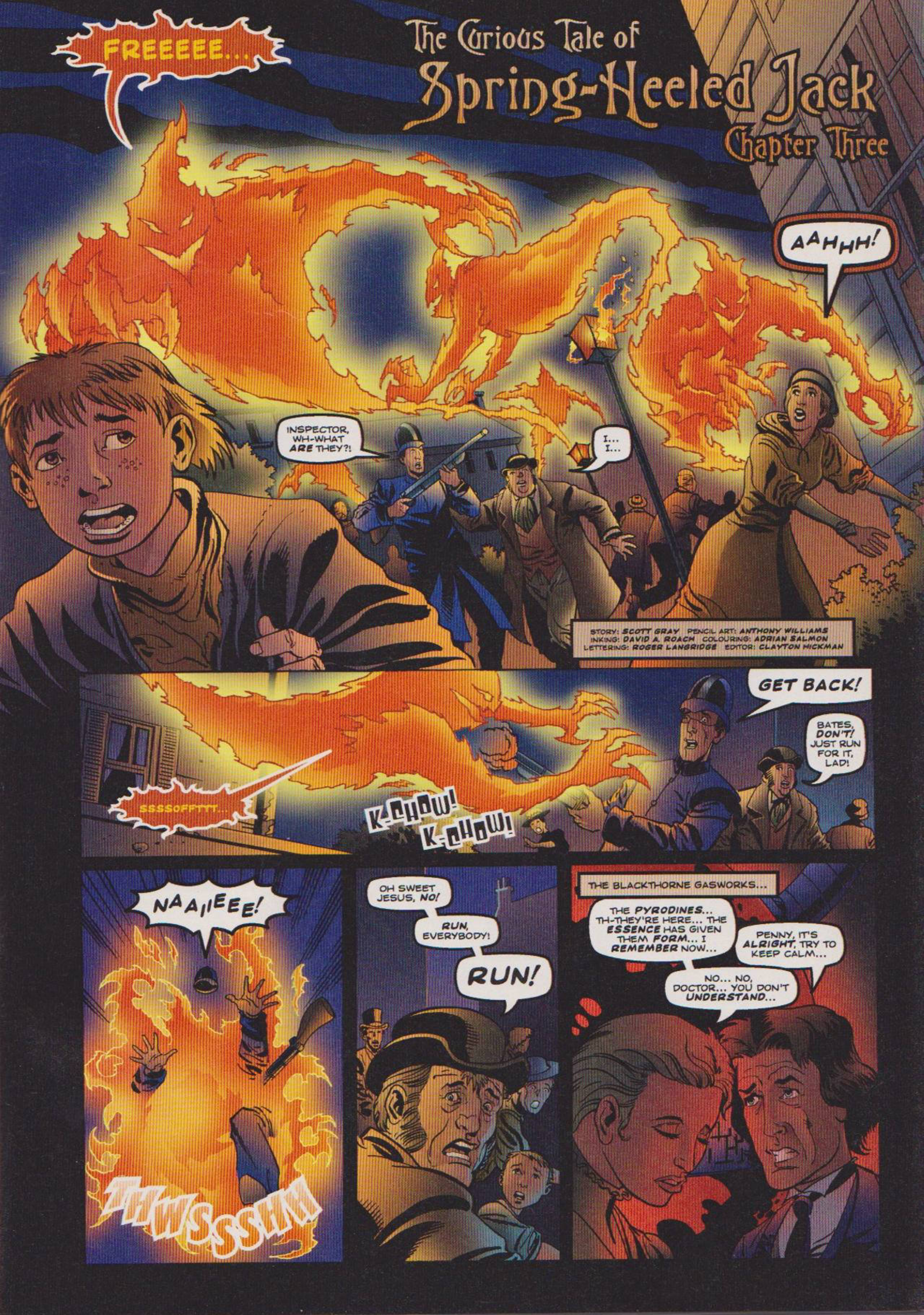
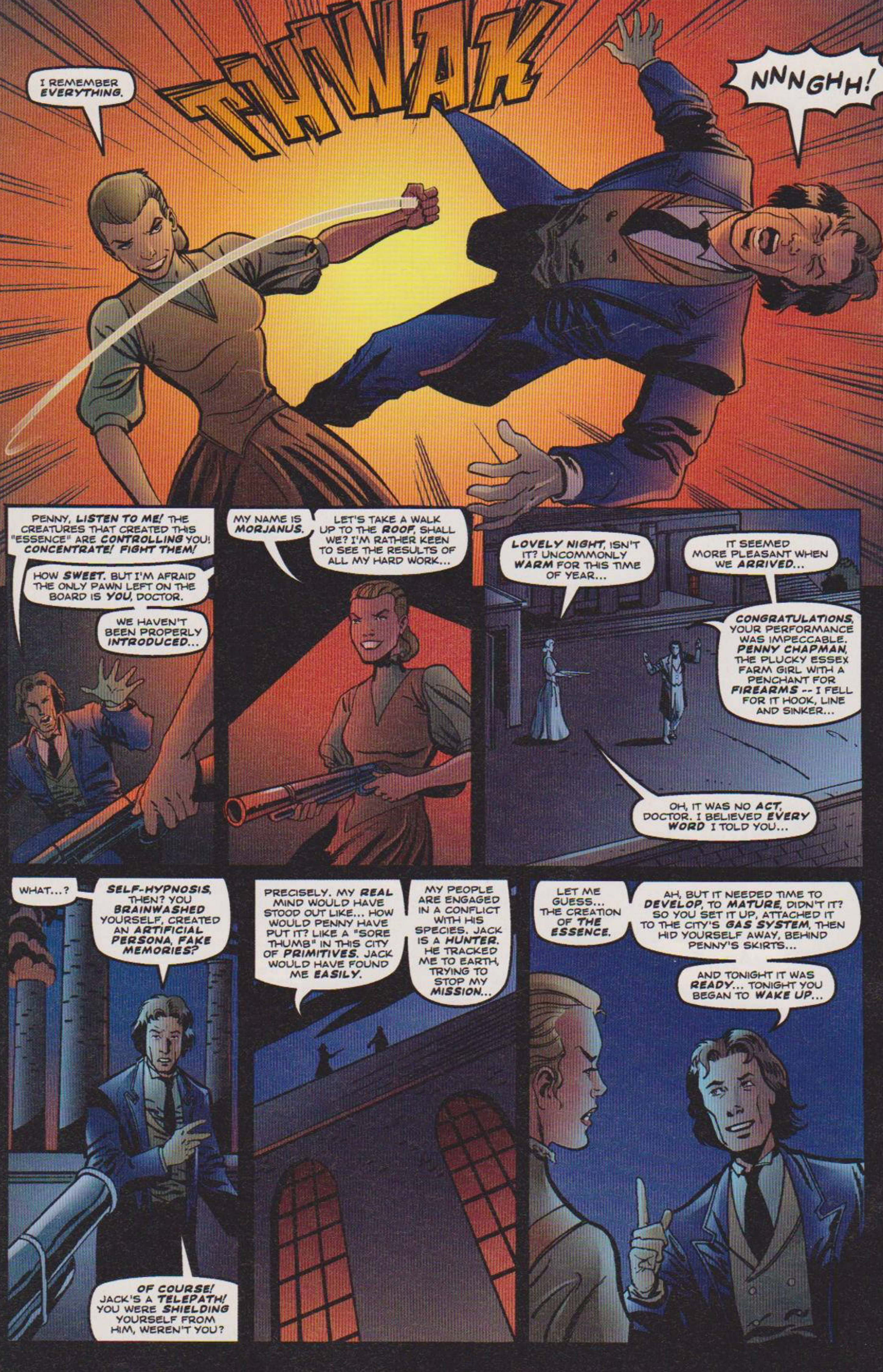
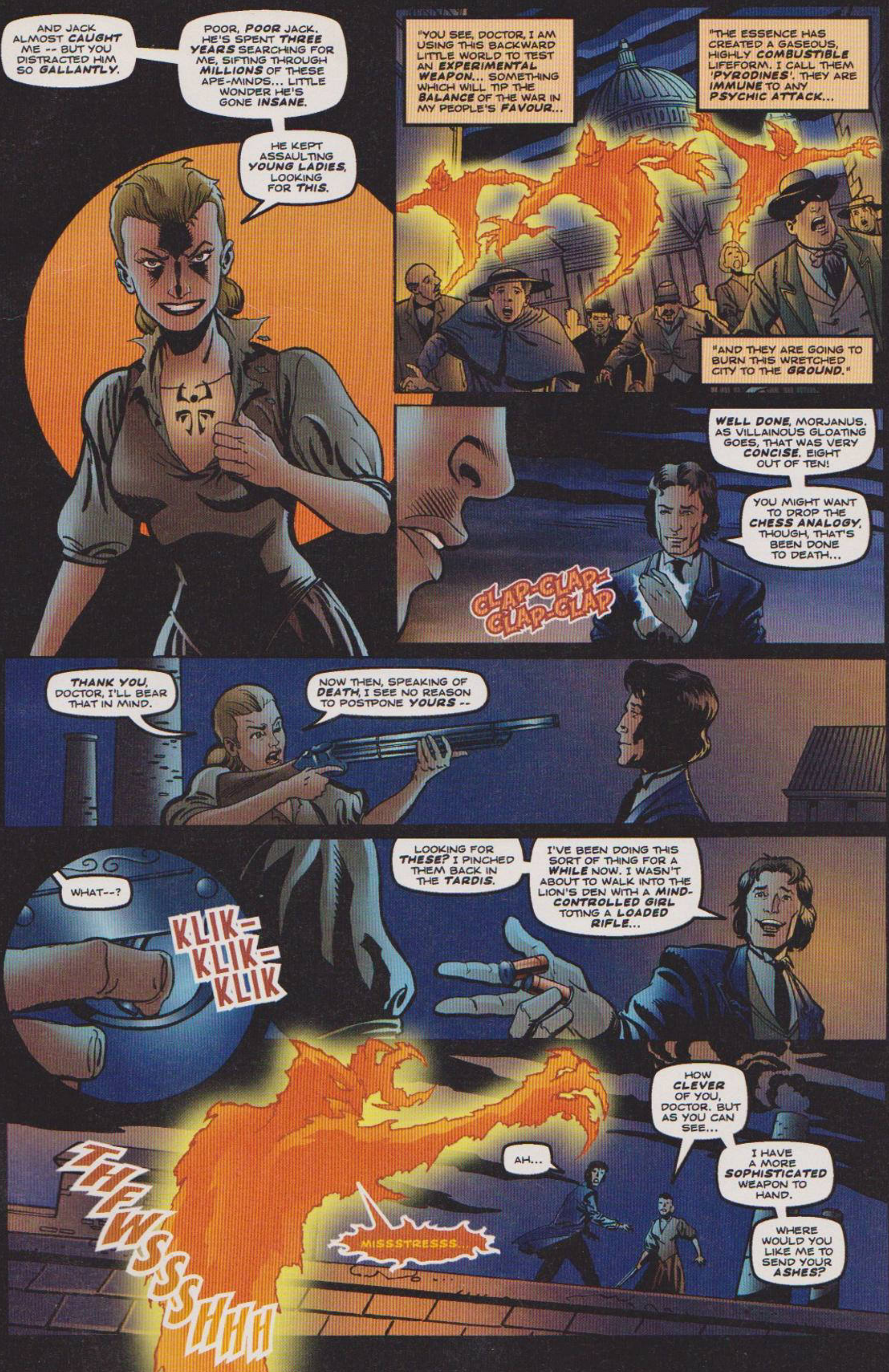
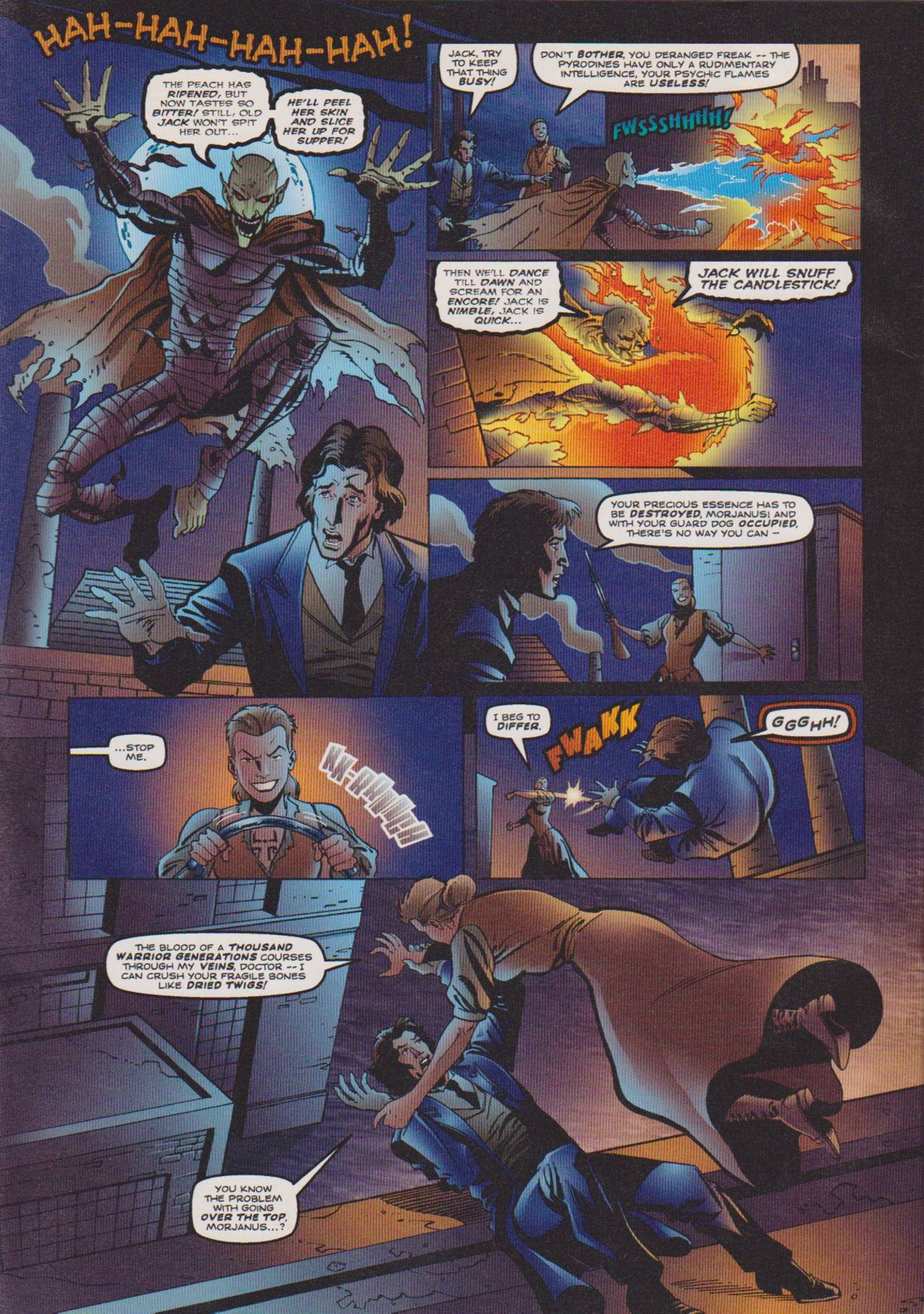
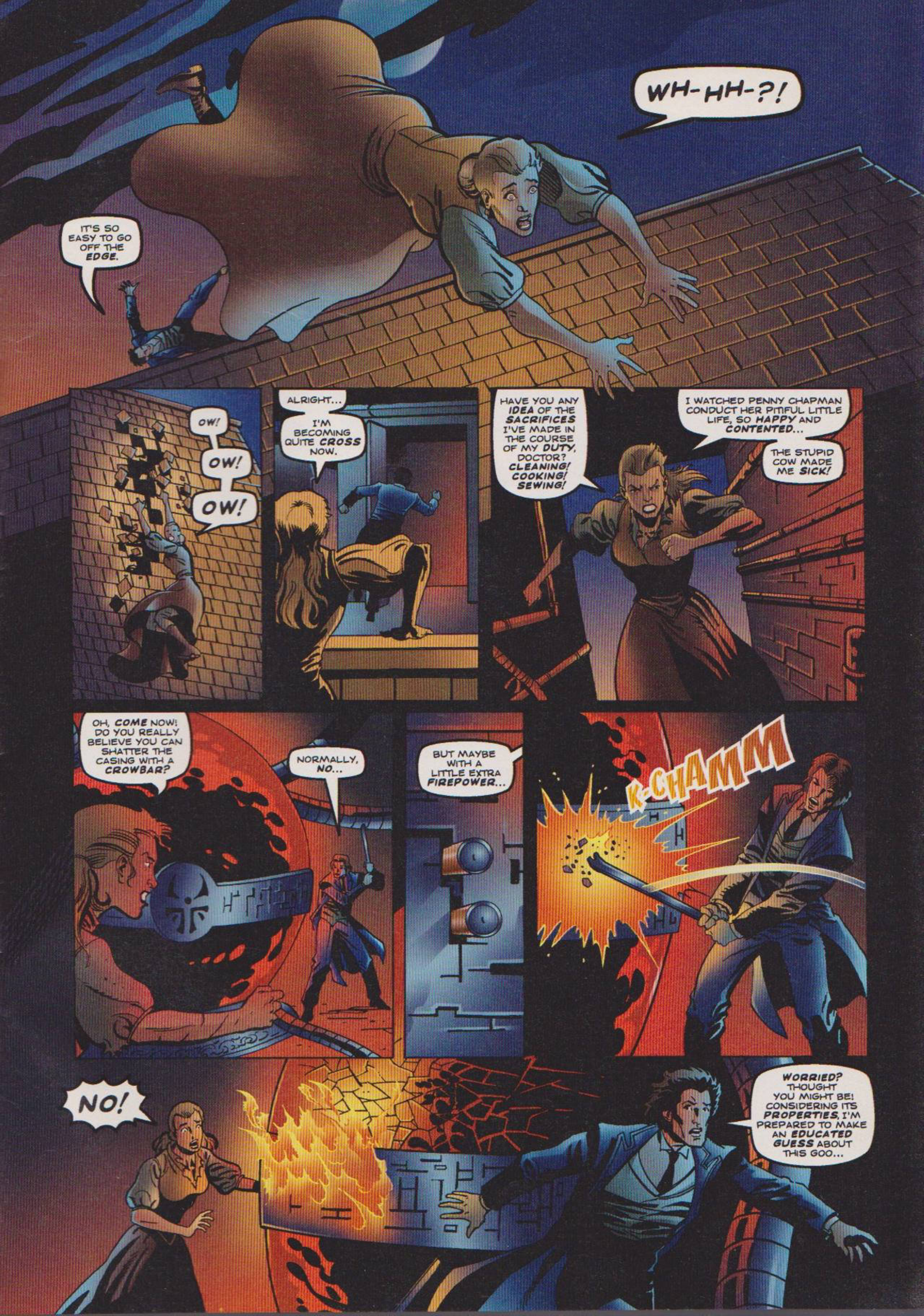
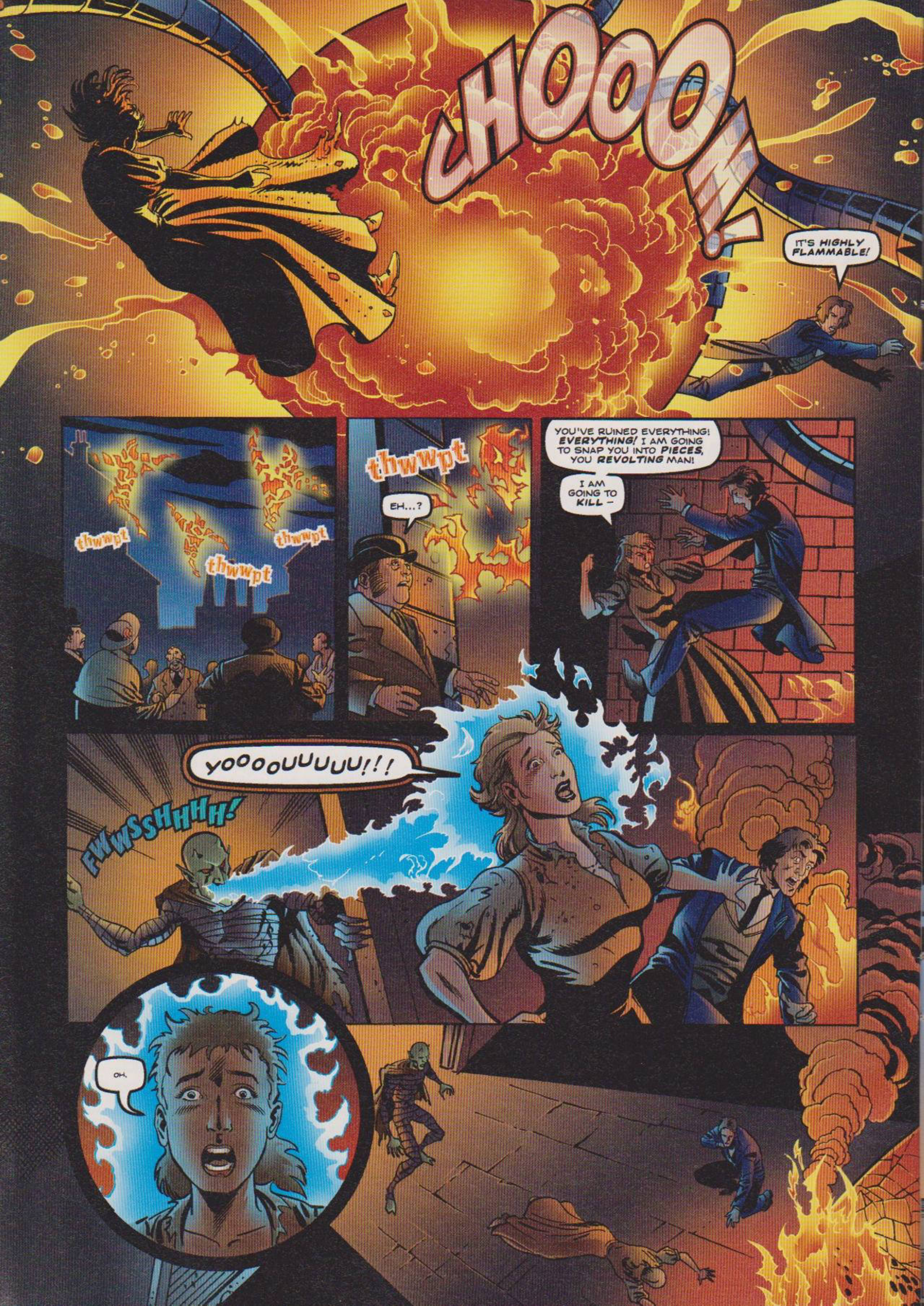

FREEEEE...
AAHHH!
INSPECTOR, WH-WHAT **ARE** THEY?!
I... I...
GET BACK!
BATES, **DON'T!** JUST RUN FOR IT, LAD!
SSSSOFFTTT...
K-CHOW! K-CHOW!
NAAIIEEE!
THWSSSSH!
OH SWEET JESUS, **NO!**
RUN, EVERYBODY!
RUN!
THE BLACKTHORNE GASWORKS...
THE **PYRODINES**... TH-THEY'RE HERE... THE **ESSENCE** HAS GIVEN THEM **FORM**... I **REMEMBER** NOW...
PENNY, IT'S **ALRIGHT**, TRY TO KEEP CALM...
NO... NO, DOCTOR... YOU DON'T **UNDERSTAND**...

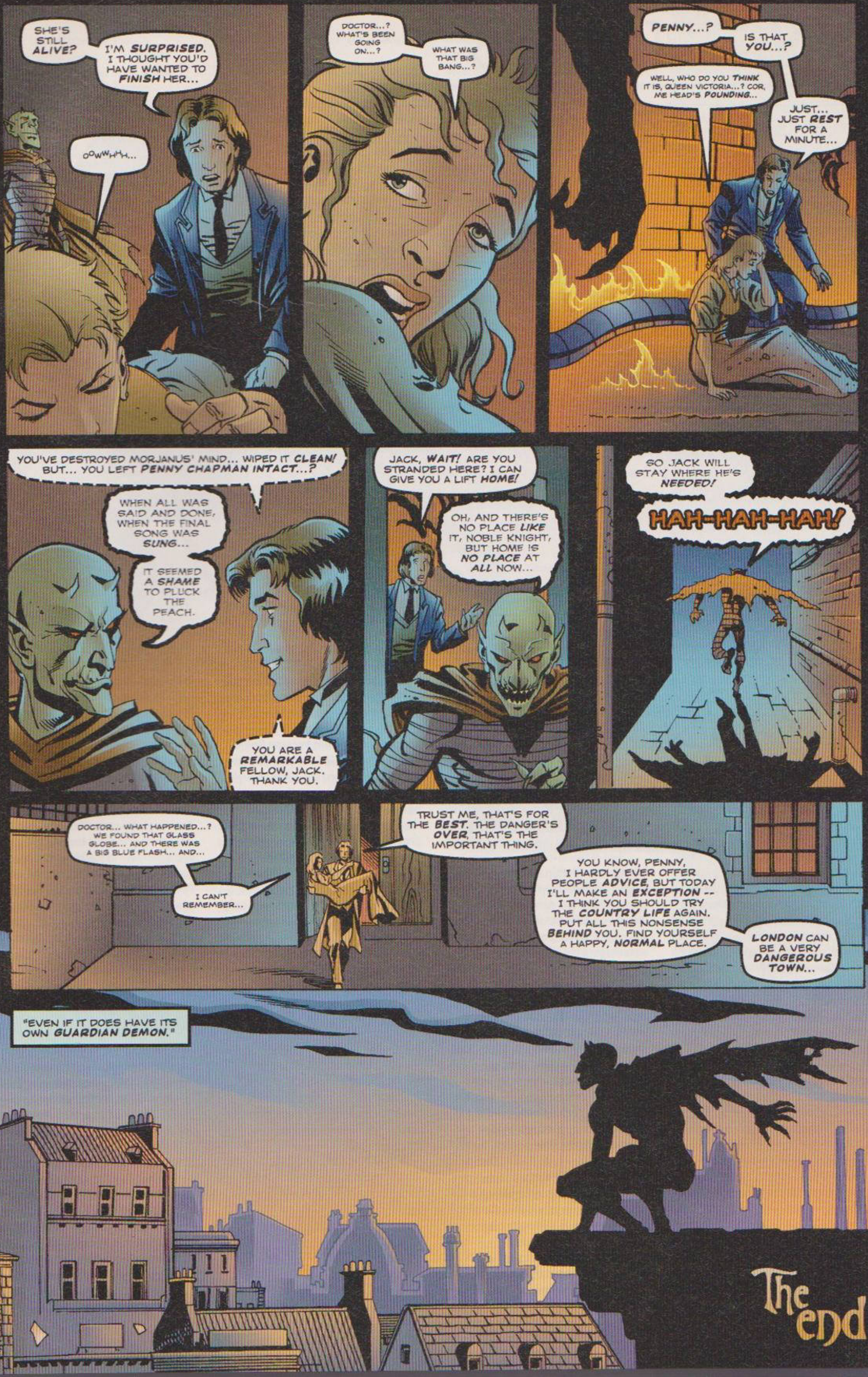

I REMEMBER EVERYTHING.
THWAK
NNNGHH!
PENNY, LISTEN TO ME! THE CREATURES THAT CREATED THIS "ESSENCE" ARE CONTROLLING YOU! CONCENTRATE! FIGHT THEM!
HOW SWEET. BUT I'M AFRAID THE ONLY PAWN LEFT ON THE BOARD IS YOU, DOCTOR.
WE HAVEN'T BEEN PROPERLY INTRODUCED...
MY NAME IS MORJANUS.
LET'S TAKE A WALK UP TO THE ROOF, SHALL WE? I'M RATHER KEEN TO SEE THE RESULTS OF ALL MY HARD WORK...
LOVELY NIGHT, ISN'T IT? UNCOMMONLY WARM FOR THIS TIME OF YEAR...
IT SEEMED MORE PLEASANT WHEN WE ARRIVED...
CONGRATULATIONS, YOUR PERFORMANCE WAS IMPECCABLE. PENNY CHAPMAN, THE PLUCKY ESSEX FARM GIRL WITH A PENCHANT FOR FIREARMS -- I FELL FOR IT HOOK, LINE AND SINKER...
OH, IT WAS NO ACT, DOCTOR. I BELIEVED EVERY WORD I TOLD YOU...
WHAT...?
SELF-HYPNOSIS, THEN? YOU BRAINWASHED YOURSELF, CREATED AN ARTIFICIAL PERSONA, FAKE MEMORIES?
OF COURSE! JACK'S A TELEPATH! YOU WERE SHIELDING YOURSELF FROM HIM, WEREN'T YOU?
PRECISELY. MY REAL MIND WOULD HAVE STOOD OUT LIKE... HOW WOULD PENNY HAVE PUT IT? LIKE A "SORE THUMB" IN THIS CITY OF PRIMITIVES. JACK WOULD HAVE FOUND ME EASILY.
MY PEOPLE ARE ENGAGED IN A CONFLICT WITH HIS SPECIES. JACK IS A HUNTER. HE TRACKED ME TO EARTH, TRYING TO STOP MY MISSION...
LET ME GUESS... THE CREATION OF THE ESSENCE.
AH, BUT IT NEEDED TIME TO DEVELOP, TO MATURE, DIDN'T IT? SO YOU SET IT UP, ATTACHED IT TO THE CITY'S GAS SYSTEM, THEN HID YOURSELF AWAY, BEHIND PENNY'S SKIRTS...
AND TONIGHT IT WAS READY... TONIGHT YOU BEGAN TO WAKE UP...


AND JACK ALMOST CAUGHT ME -- BUT YOU DISTRACTED HIM SO GALLANTLY.
POOR, POOR JACK. HE'S SPENT THREE YEARS SEARCHING FOR ME, SIFTING THROUGH MILLIONS OF THESE APE-MINDS... LITTLE WONDER HE'S GONE INSANE.
HE KEPT ASSAULTING YOUNG LADIES, LOOKING FOR THIS.
"YOU SEE, DOCTOR, I AM USING THIS BACKWARD LITTLE WORLD TO TEST AN EXPERIMENTAL WEAPON... SOMETHING WHICH WILL TIP THE BALANCE OF THE WAR IN MY PEOPLE'S FAVOUR...
"THE ESSENCE HAS CREATED A GASEOUS, HIGHLY COMBUSTIBLE LIFEFORM. I CALL THEM 'PYRODINES'. THEY ARE IMMUNE TO ANY PSYCHIC ATTACK...
"AND THEY ARE GOING TO BURN THIS WRETCHED CITY TO THE GROUND."
WELL DONE, MORJANUS. AS VILLAINOUS GLOATING GOES, THAT WAS VERY CONCISE. EIGHT OUT OF TEN!
YOU MIGHT WANT TO DROP THE CHESS ANALOGY, THOUGH, THAT'S BEEN DONE TO DEATH...
CLAP-CLAP-CLAP-CLAP
THANK YOU, DOCTOR, I'LL BEAR THAT IN MIND.
NOW THEN, SPEAKING OF DEATH, I SEE NO REASON TO POSTPONE YOURS --
WHAT--?
KLIK-KLIK-KLIK
LOOKING FOR THESE? I PINCHED THEM BACK IN THE TARDIS.
I'VE BEEN DOING THIS SORT OF THING FOR A WHILE NOW. I WASN'T ABOUT TO WALK INTO THE LION'S DEN WITH A MIND-CONTROLLED GIRL TOTING A LOADED RIFLE...
THWSSSHHH
MISSSTRESSS...
AH...
HOW CLEVER OF YOU, DOCTOR. BUT AS YOU CAN SEE...
I HAVE A MORE SOPHISTICATED WEAPON TO HAND.
WHERE WOULD YOU LIKE ME TO SEND YOUR ASHES?


HAH-HAH-HAH-HAH!
THE PEACH HAS RIPENED, BUT NOW TASTES SO BITTER! STILL, OLD JACK WON'T SPIT HER OUT...
HE'LL PEEL HER SKIN AND SLICE HER UP FOR SUPPER!
JACK, TRY TO KEEP THAT THING BUSY!
DON'T BOTHER, YOU DERANGED FREAK -- THE PYRODINES HAVE ONLY A RUDIMENTARY INTELLIGENCE, YOUR PSYCHIC FLAMES ARE USELESS!
FWSSSHHHH!
THEN WE'LL DANCE TILL DAWN AND SCREAM FOR AN ENCORE! JACK IS NIMBLE, JACK IS QUICK...
JACK WILL SNUFF THE CANDLESTICK!
YOUR PRECIOUS ESSENCE HAS TO BE DESTROYED, MORJANUS! AND WITH YOUR GUARD DOG OCCUPIED, THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN –
...STOP ME.
NN-AHHHHH!!
I BEG TO DIFFER.
FWAKK
GGGHH!
THE BLOOD OF A THOUSAND WARRIOR GENERATIONS COURSES THROUGH MY VEINS, DOCTOR -- I CAN CRUSH YOUR FRAGILE BONES LIKE DRIED TWIGS!
YOU KNOW THE PROBLEM WITH GOING OVER THE TOP, MORJANUS...?


WH-HH-?!
IT'S SO EASY TO GO OFF THE EDGE.
OW!
OW!
OW!
ALRIGHT... I'M BECOMING QUITE CROSS NOW.
HAVE YOU ANY IDEA OF THE SACRIFICES I'VE MADE IN THE COURSE OF MY DUTY, DOCTOR? CLEANING! COOKING! SEWING!
I WATCHED PENNY CHAPMAN CONDUCT HER PITIFUL LITTLE LIFE, SO HAPPY AND CONTENTED...
THE STUPID COW MADE ME SICK!
OH, COME NOW! DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE YOU CAN SHATTER THE CASING WITH A CROWBAR?
NORMALLY, NO...
BUT MAYBE WITH A LITTLE EXTRA FIREPOWER...
K-CHAMM
NO!
WORRIED? THOUGHT YOU MIGHT BE! CONSIDERING ITS PROPERTIES, I'M PREPARED TO MAKE AN EDUCATED GUESS ABOUT THIS GOO...


CHOOOM!
IT'S HIGHLY FLAMMABLE!
thwwpt
thwwpt
thwwpt
thwwpt
EH...?
YOU'VE RUINED EVERYTHING! EVERYTHING! I AM GOING TO SNAP YOU INTO PIECES, YOU REVOLTING MAN!
I AM GOING TO KILL –
YOOOOUUUUU!!!
FWWSSHHHH!
OH.


SHE'S STILL ALIVE?
I'M SURPRISED. I THOUGHT YOU'D HAVE WANTED TO FINISH HER...
OOWWHHH...
DOCTOR...? WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON...?
WHAT WAS THAT BIG BANG...?
PENNY...?
IS THAT YOU...?
WELL, WHO DO YOU THINK IT IS, QUEEN VICTORIA...? COR, ME HEAD'S POUNDING...
JUST... JUST REST FOR A MINUTE...
YOU'VE DESTROYED MORJANUS' MIND... WIPED IT CLEAN! BUT... YOU LEFT PENNY CHAPMAN INTACT...?
WHEN ALL WAS SAID AND DONE, WHEN THE FINAL SONG WAS SUNG...
IT SEEMED A SHAME TO PLUCK THE PEACH.
YOU ARE A REMARKABLE FELLOW, JACK. THANK YOU.
JACK, WAIT! ARE YOU STRANDED HERE? I CAN GIVE YOU A LIFT HOME!
OH, AND THERE'S NO PLACE LIKE IT, NOBLE KNIGHT, BUT HOME IS NO PLACE AT ALL NOW...
SO JACK WILL STAY WHERE HE'S NEEDED!
HAH-HAH-HAH!
DOCTOR... WHAT HAPPENED...? WE FOUND THAT GLASS GLOBE... AND THERE WAS A BIG BLUE FLASH... AND...
I CAN'T REMEMBER...
TRUST ME, THAT'S FOR THE BEST. THE DANGER'S OVER, THAT'S THE IMPORTANT THING.
YOU KNOW, PENNY, I HARDLY EVER OFFER PEOPLE ADVICE, BUT TODAY I'LL MAKE AN EXCEPTION -- I THINK YOU SHOULD TRY THE COUNTRY LIFE AGAIN. PUT ALL THIS NONSENSE BEHIND YOU. FIND YOURSELF A HAPPY, NORMAL PLACE.
LONDON CAN BE A VERY DANGEROUS TOWN...
"EVEN IF IT DOES HAVE ITS OWN GUARDIAN DEMON."
The end

DWM REVIEWS

ILLUSTRATION BY ROGER LANGRIDGE

WARNING: SPOILERS AHEAD!

DOCTOR WHO: THE CURSE OF FENRIC

DVD BBC WORLDWIDE
AUTHOR IAN BRIGGS
RRP £19.99
REVIEWER VANESSA BISHOP

The Curse of Fenric is so packed full of themes, ideas, issues and influences that there's a certain pressure brought to bear on the reviewer to discuss them all, so as not to look like they've missed the point. Well, to be honest, I think I *have* missed the odd point – in fact, I've probably missed several. Take writer Ian Briggs' comment in his interview, that Millington and Judson are gay. Well, if I ever thought that, then I've long since forgotten it. And then there's the Ancient Haemovore's similarities to David Bowie's *The Man Who Fell to Earth*, but I'm going to disallow that one, as Briggs has only just thought of it, and there's far too much to ponder on already!

Fenric is unique in *Doctor Who*, being the very thing *The Dæmons* pretended to be for years but wasn't – a proper supernatural story ... or as near as *Doctor Who* ever got to one. There are no aliens in *Fenric*, or hidden spaceships. 'Fenric' is evil, pure evil – its curse isn't like Peladon's, stage-managed and faked, but *real*, with the power to carve runes into stone and whip up time-storms at will. It's unclear whether the translation of the runes, read over moody, underwater shots of the dragon ship, are supposed to be seen as spells, encouraging the curse back to life, or just a directorial flourish on the part of Nick Mallett to keep the screen interesting. What is clear, or what becomes clear after a couple of viewings, is that the story's supernatural elements mean it doesn't play by the usual *Doctor Who* rules. First, the curse rules the plot – it can make it do things without any real explanation. Actually, Briggs doesn't cheat with this as much as he might. It only starts to look strained with the flask unearthing itself just in time for Ace to find it. Second, science isn't really a part of the victory. The battle isn't won by inventing a box with lights on, or by sending the army in – though there's enough of them on hand. No, it's won with *faith*.

Briggs' reinterpretation of faith as a belief in anything at all has always been controversial. However, this view, to me, seems quite eloquently handled, and nowhere near as sacrilegious as it did back in 1989. In some ways, it actually seems to support belief systems: utter faith repels evil. Wainwright dies, not because Briggs says there is no God, but because he personally stopped believing. Actually, *Fenric* appears to have rather more patience with religion and worship than most *Doctor Who*. If you want final proof, think about St Jude's – it's just about the only church the show doesn't symbolically blow up before the final credits!

The only real problem with the script is that, in trying to do and say so much, the information can sometimes come across feeling rushed (the "Evil since the dawn of time" speech), or too cryptic – Ace's flirtation with the squaddie, which struggles between being meaningful and meaningless and ends up halfway towards being a weather forecast!

It has to be said that all this and much more besides has been made a lot better in the 'Special Edition', officially an 'Extra' but one so big I'm going to have to deal with it here. Unlike *Fenric*'s extended video release, this isn't just a cynical dropping-in of unseen material, but a complete re-edit, with new effects, souped-up music, and a 5.1 sound mix. Its Commander-in-Chief is Mark Ayres, working to Nick Mallett's original vision and it's all expertly done. The best thing about it is its subtlety – nothing's been over-egged or made so flashy that it looks incongruous with the original production. Just to pick a few favourites from the new effects, I'll go for the runes, and the lights that briefly play under the water on summoning the Ancient Haemovore. Perhaps the only unnecessary move is the replaying of Ace's goodbye to Kathleen and baby Audrey in the final confrontation with Fenric. It's too soon after the scene proper, and it was never a point that felt in need of clarification anyway – Ace is holding a picture of the baby, after all. Most pleasing of all, however, is that the story now has time to *breathe* – there's much less choppy cutting from one location to another and story points that had seemed obscure before, suddenly begin to make sense. I can't help thinking that there are plenty of other Cartmel-era tales which would benefit hugely from similar treatment.

Fenric works well as a 'film' because Briggs doesn't write recaps – he just barges through with plot. Also, it's all on location so it looks the part too. The Restoration Team keep talking like there's a possibility of re-selling it to TV as a movie, and they're in with a good chance, I reckon. *The Curse of Fenric*

FENRIC IS UNIQUE IN **DOCTOR WHO** – A PROPER SUPERNATURAL STORY is now one of the most visually accomplished pieces of *Doctor Who* we've got. I would just think about doing something with the title sequence – it's looking worse and worse.

DVD EXTRAS

The new 'Special Edition' receives a Making of ... and has Mark Ayres pointing out the changes. I like Ayres. I like all of the Restoration Team. They send me test discs when you can't get zip out of the so-called proper channels, but – oh, don't they love their technical talk! Ayres, on *Resurrection of the Daleks*' 5.1 mix – why it was faked up and why this one's better – is as clear to me as Ace's weird come-on to the soldier. Actually, it's probably not that complicated. In fact, I bet it's dumbed down quite a lot for the simple likes of me to understand ... but I don't. Well, not much beyond the theory, anyway, which doesn't mean it isn't worthy of admiration or that the result doesn't sound superb.

We haven't had a writer's interview before – several writers of previous releases are dead! Ian Briggs isn't, but is lit in morgue-ish blues to look like he might be. Briggs proves what a valuable strand this could be. After listening to him, you can't say you don't think about a few things in *Fenric* differently – although he's wrong about McCoy's ability to play anger.

Phillip Schofield and *Take Two* will always have to carry the can for over-hyping the death of vampires Jean and Phyllis, and causing the final effect to seem unnecessarily disappointing. Their decomposing heads return in *Claws and Effects*, amidst footage of a location recce. The best bit of this – really a piece about visual effects tests – is seeing Crowborough Training Camp and the bland army huts before the production dressed them. Costume designer Ken Trew, of course, has more than *Fenric* on his *Doctor Who* credits, so I hope more's been filmed than we see here. Trew's affection for the show is rather wonderful, and his maxim on costumes, "the simpler the better" makes for the perfect link to Debbie Flint and a name-check for the Haemovore head-making footage cribbed from BSB's *Doctor Who Weekend*.

There's not much I can add about the Fenric convention panel, except that it has Tomek Bork, who was wanted for the commentary, but in the end isn't missed that much. Nicholas Parsons has received much praise for Reverend Wainwright – quite right, and he's just as good with Sophie and Sylvester on the disc's commentary. Things fall quiet when Wainwright's on, and pick up again after, with things like "Hmm. I think I got away with it ..." The abiding sense you get from Parsons is respect, that the show respected him and vice versa. It makes for heartwarming listening.

DOCTOR WHO: FLIP-FLOP

DOCTOR WHO
Flip-Flop

AUDIO DRAMA BIG FINISH
AUTHOR JONATHAN MORRIS
RRP £13.99
REVIEWER DAVE OWEN

It's Christmas Eve again for the audio adventures, an occasion that comes approximately annually, but not necessarily in December. As its name hints, *Flip-Flop* is a release you can take on your summer holidays, but refers not to rubber sandals, but instead to a computer logic switch, also known as an Astable Multivibrator, and, less intimidatingly, a toggle switch. Press it once and it enters state A – press it again and it enters state B. And so on, ad infinitum.

This release throws one's prejudices as a listener into sharp relief. Having known well in advance that the two discs can be experienced in any order, just as some people, for reasons of their own, choose to read *The Time Team* before **DWM** *Reviews* each month, I had suspected that *Flip-Flop* would possibly depict a visit by the Doctor and Mel to the same place, either at different times, as in *The Ark*, or author Jonathan Morris' novel *Festival of Death*, or at the same time, experiencing and influencing events in two different aspects. The truth, as one of *Doctor Who*'s unsung heroes might put it, is a little of each and a great deal more of something else.

Each disc depicts a visit by the Doctor and Mel to the same planet, seeking some crystals to deal with some Quarks (the script is coy about whether these are the subatomic kind, or the strangely charming robot servants of the cruel Dominators), yet they find the planet in a different state each time. Both visits include a trip back in time to alter history pivotally, to the state things are in at the start of the other visit, and a hop forwards to just before our heroes are due to arrive for the first time. Whichever disc you start with, the next one follows on logically, and if you're not careful, you can end up listening forever, because this is a story with no beginning, two middles, and no end.

The button for this temporal toggle (as Mel would say, still coming across here like an alliteration addict on antidepressants, but crucially aware of her nature as she needs to be to be credible) is whether or not the planet allows an influx of alien immigrants. The result is not quite Powellian rivers of blood, and to take this piece as a serious comment on immigration and asylum would be as silly as regarding *The Happiness Patrol* as a serious statement on gay rights.

Doctor Who's recent discovery, on disc and in print, that time travel changes the past, is well illustrated by comparing *Flip-Flop* to *Day of the Daleks*. Both involve fanatics travelling back in time to change history. But whereas in the earlier story, the rebels find they are part of the One True History, and nothing is permanently changed, here, history is altered, and the Doctor has no way of travelling sideways between versions. Oddly, the laws of cause and effect don't seem to work on people who have travelled in the TARDIS, so the rebels who go back with the Doctor and Mel still have their memories of experiences which no longer happened, and on travelling forward again, get to co-exist with the new versions of themselves. There really should be a rulebook for matters like this.

For all the political intrigue and social satire, the causal wheels-within-wheels are the stars of *Flip-Flop*, and I doubt that the alien Slithergees, fascist parasites wreathed in a cloud of Political Correctness will trouble *Doctor Who* again. And I chortle with sadistic glee at the enormity of the fly that has just landed in the ointment of canon – one of these discs' events took place for the Doctor and Mel, but not both. And until we hear the events of one of them referred to in a future release, then there will be a part of the Doctor's history that is as undetermined as the fate of Schroëinger's cat.

If the Seventh Doctor and Mel had had stories as clever as this on TV, the series might still be running. But even if I could, I wouldn't risk popping back to 1987 and offering the series the script for *Flip-Flop*, because if it were made then, it could never be made now and then where would we be? Exactly. Turned out nice again ...

ALSO RELEASED

DOCTOR WHO: FALLEN GODS

AUTHORS JONATHAN BLUM
& KATE ORMAN
TELOS, £10 (STANDARD)
£25 (DELUXE)

Doctor Who hasn't had a lot of success with stories about Greek myths. In fact, the old gag about avoiding stories with 'Time' in the title also applies to them ... which I suppose made *The Time Monster* a no-hoper from the start! As always, Hartnell got there first and did it best with Season Three's *The Myth Makers*, and it's that head-on approach that Kate Orman and Jonathan Blum take in *Fallen Gods*, albeit with fewer one-liners and wooden horses. Set on the volcanic island of Thera in the Minoan Empire, it tells the story of Perdix and Alcestis, Perdix being the name the Eighth Doctor adopts, Alcestis being the former priestess he's teaching to fly – or, more accurately, surf the time-streams. It's a gift very few possess and, with the Empire under attack from bull-like fire demons, one that has her seen as a saviour.

As Storm Constantine's foreword says, "There are so many allusions to Greek legend ... that it's a delight for any reader interested in the subject to try to spot them all." Shamefully, most of what I know about the subject comes from *Doctor Who* in the first place – that, and Ray Harryhausen films. I would, though – even without Constantine's help – have spotted the Doctor being cast as another modern Prometheus. Half-Titan, half-human, Prometheus gave humans the gift of fire – the Doctor discovers the powerful properties of fire crystals – and he was also chained to a rock while an eagle pecked out his liver, which gory event has inspired *Fallen Gods*' finalé. Of course, you'd think that one of the appeals of Greek myth to *Doctor Who* would be its monsters. Monsters, though, have never seemed Orman and Blum's thing, and the fire demons presented as the story's 'threat' provide some exciting, airborne scenes, but aren't really that frightening.

What I don't get about Greek myth on TV or film are the gods and the mortals who, despite often being up to the most debauched and wicked things, are usually portrayed as dull and haughty statuettes. Orman and Blum do well to inject a bit of life into their characters, but they still feel a familiar bunch – King Rhadamanthys (erudite but untrustworthy), High Priestess Britomartis (venerable but untrustworthy) and a variety of courtiers (all untrustworthy). Clearly we're supposed to be the most interested in the Doctor's friendship with Alcestis. Their early scenes are written almost as if they're lovers, with the simplest, most sensual moment being the Doctor draping Alcestis in strips of silk while creating a dress for her to fly in ("I didn't mean for you to look like an angel," he says). But all this bonding does mean the story takes some time to get going, and things aren't that much quicker when their relationship eventually falls apart; the soul-searching going round and round in emotional circles. Personally, though, I found the Doctor's edgy relationship with the King more interesting. It's another Holmes and Moriarty set-up, gentlemanly on the surface, all dangerous intent underneath, but their sharp and quick-witted dialogue is excellent. The two Reichenbach Falls-style confrontations – at the edge of the volcano, and on the roof of the palace – are excitingly handled too.

Fallen Gods also plays at being a 'whodunnit', but it's a half-hearted one. When we do discover who's behind the fire demons, their exposure is rather garbled, and I was left momentarily unsure who the villain was. But then, *Fallen Gods* isn't really about exposing one culprit, but rather unearthing the whole corrupt nature of Thera's royalty, deceiving its people with lies while maintaining its own power with horrific practices. I'm not at all sure I would have twigged the story's parallels with 9/11 if the authors hadn't already mentioned it as part of their inspiration, but as they had, a lot of *Fallen Gods* seems quite pointed and critical of the US. The greedy, arrogant Minoan Empire is made to accept roughly the same thought that Sam Raimi's recent *Spider-Man* kept stressing about post-9/11 America – that with great power comes great responsibility.

With all *Fallen Gods'* death and guilt, there isn't much room for humour – although the Doctor's "That's the trouble with the Bronze Age, it cramps my metaphors" did have me chuckling – but it's done with sophistication and style and, as always, Orman and Blum have written a perfect Eighth Doctor. It hasn't dislodged *The Myth Makers* as my favourite *Doctor Who* excursion into this territory, but it's horns and shoulders above *The Time Monster*.

VANESSA BISHOP

DOCTOR WHO: SHORT TRIPS: A UNIVERSE OF TERRORS

EDITOR JOHN BINNS,
BIG FINISH, £14.99

Let's face it, *Doctor Who* isn't science fiction. The best-remembered stories are those that take their cues from classic horror: Mummies lumbering through a lonely forest clearing; the Master summoning up the devil; Jack the Ripper stalking his next victim through the London fog; a malignant gargoyle leering through a crack in a church wall. These are the images that stick in the memory long after the pseudo-scientific 'bafflegab' fades. The news that Big Finish was to devote its next short story anthology to behind-the-sofa scariness was very welcome to those of us who are hardened connoisseurs of Gothic fiction.

Christopher Lee once opined that the difference between horror and terror was that one was a physical reaction, akin to revulsion, and the other was a purer emotion of extreme fear. The stories in *A Universe of Terrors* seek to evoke both states. It's hard to imagine, for example, Trevor Baxendale setting out to do anything other than horrify in *Ash*, in which the First Doctor recalls an unsettling encounter with

DOCTOR WHO:
THE COLONY OF LIES

NOVEL BBC BOOKS
AUTHOR COLIN BRAKE
RRP £5.99
REVIEWER MATT MICHAEL

On a distant human colony, a bitter conflict is raging between the loyal adherents to the back-to-basics principles of the founding fathers, and rebels who believe that the colony should embrace technology. Into the conflict comes a military ship from Earth that needs to prepare the colony for an influx of immigrants; a hibernating race of canine aliens – the Tyrenians – who want to wipe out the humans completely; and the Second Doctor, Jamie and Zoe, who just want to get back to the TARDIS.

The Colony of Lies touches on topical questions of unfettered immigration, modernisation and genetic engineering. Unfortunately, it fails to explore any of those questions in a meaningful way, preferring to descend into a dismal pastiche of *Star Trek: Insurrection* – right down to the invisible base concealed in a lake.

What particularly grates is the trite and hackneyed characterisation. Motivations are crude and unconvincing (Billy Joe runs off to join the Realists because of what happened to his father), and characters seem to undergo personality changes on a whim (the hardened space captain Major Cartor commits suicide while his career-minded second-in-command decides to throw it all in to become a colonist). Worse, when the *de facto* Tyrenian leader, Zenig, accepts that his people are actually genetically-altered humans merely on the basis of a video of a dead human, he's abandoning a lifetime of conditioning on the say-so of his mortal enemy.

The plotting is desperately lazy. People continually realise plot points 'instinctively' – hence Billy Joe 'instinctively' feels he can trust Zoe, and Zoe 'instinctively' realises that an asteroid belt is actually a ring of artificial satellites. In fact, Zoe seems to have added second sight to her list of talents, as she resolves to warn the inhabitants of Axista 4 about the true scale of a refugee problem that she's never been told about. This out-of-character behaviour extends to the Second Doctor, who appears to have developed an unhealthy obsession with the Time Lords, and the Seventh Doctor, who may not have been averse to leaving messages for himself to find, but who would surely have thought twice about passing data crystals to his previous incarnations just to help them out of a tight spot. Jamie, at least, is his dependable self, thinking with his fists, and getting into a couple of mildly diverting fights.

The book feels like a first draft, complete with appalling prose ('he knew the truth, and he'd had enough of the lies'), and pages of info-dump about the back-to-basics ideal of the original colonists. What is particularly depressing about *The Colony of Lies* is that, even for a first draft, there's nothing here that hasn't been done, more successfully, elsewhere. The most interesting idea, the effects of intensive immigration on a society, is never addressed because the novel concludes before the immigrants arrive. Because of the number of different parties involved in the conflict, the book never seems to develop any one idea into anything worthwhile. As a result, a lot happens, but none of it means very much – the book reads like the novelisation of a story that the author hasn't quite understood.

There are a few decent bits to be picked out. When the Doctor observes that the colony is based on a myth of the American West, rather than the ever-evolving reality – and that the drive to colonise the western states was made possible by the most potent symbol of 19th Century modernisation, the railway, he's pointing out that the 'lie' on which the colony is founded is more than just the ill-gotten fortune of Stewart Ransom. Likewise, when the cryogenically-preserved Kirann Ransom is revived, she swiftly passes a harsh judgement on the conservative lifestyle of the Loyalists, who have perverted the original colonists' idealism to an inflexible ideology. But for the most part, the book's insights are fatuous, and it tends to focus on plodding action sequences (such as Zoe's *Star Wars*-style escape from the starship *Hannibal*) rather than expanding on these themes. Poorly written and badly plotted, this is the worst novel that the BBC has published in quite some time. With 40 years to perfect the formula, there's really no excuse for this infuriating nonsense.

THERE'S NOTHING HERE THAT HASN'T BEEN DONE BETTER ELSEWHERE...

DOCTOR WHO UNBOUND:
FULL FATHOM FIVE

AUDIO DRAMA BIG FINISH
AUTHOR DAVID BISHOP
RRP £9.99
REVIEWER DAVE OWEN

Bill Shakespeare was, I must concede, one of the best scripters the RSC has ever had. Specifically, his Sea Dirge from *The Tempest*, although omitted from the 1956 film version, is one of the most unsettling pieces of verse I have ever heard. It plays as the inspiration to the third of Big Finish's single-disc fugues on *Doctor Who*'s main themes. If the first two *Unbound* plays were explorations of different angles the Doctor's path might have followed within the same environments, this is a more ambiguous exploration of *Doctor Who* with a differently-natured protagonist in a different kind of storytelling.

Superficially this new Doctor isn't too dissimilar to the grim hero of *Sympathy for the Devil* – think Colin Baker minus Giles Brandreth equals David Collings and you'll be close enough to the right equation. Yet we find him in a story that could never be part of mainstream *Doctor Who*. Like the Master in the preceding story, he's been stuck on Earth without access to his TARDIS for decades. Whether it's this that has eroded his likeability – he's lost the knack of pleasing many people at the same time and become a crusader rather than a diplomat – or that in this version of *Doctor Who*, he is simply a far blunter character, we never learn. He's still utterly true to his beliefs, though, possibly more so than the other Doctors we know, who would compromise, temporarily leaving planets unsaved to keep their companions alive, for example. This Doctor, unafraid to sacrifice pawns – truth even – to win the game, as is as far from Collings' uncomfortable Poul of *The Robots of Death*, or his distinctly light-on-his-feet Silver of *Sapphire and Steel* as it is possible to imagine. It's a coup of casting against type.

This time, the *Unbound* Doctor gets a proper companion, rather than an older version of one we already knew, with Siri O'Neill's Ruth at least equalling the standards set by her predecessors.

When she (appropriately) freaks out on encountering a lab full of non-viable genetically modified humans, she communicates terror just as well as Sarah Jane, and when she finally tires of being lied to by the Doctor, her disgust with him is right up there with *New Adventures* Ace. A performance like this alone indicates that Jason Haigh-Ellery's métier as director may be these shorter, punchier plays.

From the way Ed Bishop's dodgy General sounds more like gravelly comedian Rich Hall than UFO's Commander Straker, I imagine that Bishop shares Straker's love of tobacco. His presence is as apt as it is overdue – UFO was a fantastically-realised show based on some ludicrous premises and arbitrary decisions, as is *Full Fathom Five*. The setting, a research base on the floor of the ocean, is supposedly justified by the availability of genetic material from super-hardy deep-sea organisms. Wouldn't it be cheaper, safer, and easier to harvest the DNA there but conduct the experiments on the surface? I didn't hear a reason in the dialogue, but it makes for a far more exciting story to confine the action to the deeps. And would injecting humans with Enhanced DNA in the presence of accidental radiation turn them into amphibious super-soldiers? I suppose it depends on your definition of 'Enhanced', but don't be fooled into thinking this is any more scientific than UFO's purple wigs and silver mini-dresses. But who cares about science when the result is so thrilling? And *Full Fathom Five* is really rather exciting, as well.

I know we print a disclaimer about 'Spoilers' (a ghastly coinage, which reminds me horribly of custom Ford Escorts) at the top of this page, which usually gives us *carte blanche* to be as cavalier as we like about plot details, but I wouldn't dare give away the ending of this play. If anyone appears to be about to tell you, put your fingers in your ears and start to sing loudly and tunelessly, as though you were Bob or Terry in that classic football results *Whatever Happened to the Likely Lads* episode. The final moments of *Full Fathom Five* are as dramatic an achievement as Big Finish has ever managed, being the very opposite of a trite, convenient, cosy denouement. Obvious film references and arbitrary plot justifications do not matter a jot when they lead to such a gloriously shocking finalé.

DOCTOR WHO: INVASION OF THE DINOSAURS

VIDEO BBC VIDEO
AUTHOR MALCOLM HULKE
RRP £12.99
REVIEWER VANESSA BISHOP

Invasion of the Dinosaurs ... oh lord, where to start? The last complete story on VHS, Mike Yates gone bad, Sarah's brown trouser-suit, or the bendy dinosaurs? Let's take the worst of these first – I mean, honestly, just where did she get it? And that boyish hair-cut that Pertwee caused a fuss about – he was quite right too! Still, you've got to love her, haven't you? The pushy journalist in the *Peoples' Friend* fashions – shame about the vaguely embarrassing Women's Lib stuff, though. Sarah joined the series a professional woman and left a little girl. Yates joined a hero and ended up a villain. Richard Franklin's much more convincing as a loony ecologist than a soldier – but then, I've never really seen the point of Mike Yates. He's far too much an Eton drip to have ever interested a groovy young thing like Jo. And I don't believe for a minute that Yates is that fussed about hearing a nightingale in Berkeley Square, or that he thinks unleashing a Tyrannosaurus Rex is the best way to go about it. No, the reason Yates turned into a batty environmentalist is because Jo went off with one in *The Green Death* – you can see it written all over his sad little 'mummy's boy' face!

Right, we can't put it off any longer – the dinosaurs. No, they're not very good, and there's no point pretending that they don't matter because, clearly, they do. *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* is easily the best directed, paciest, most exciting script in Season Eleven. Its characters are the best drawn and the best performed. After all, this is the one with such a good cast – Peter Miles and John Bennett among them – that it can afford to waste Martin Jarvis in a part that would usually be played by Terry Walsh. But to be honest, it's Pertwee that interests me most. He looks so tired and depressed in Part One, you can't help but wonder if he's thinking about Delgado's death, and if he should move on from the series himself. Whatever, it all seems to work in a positive way for Malcolm Hulke's script, which repeatedly puts the Doctor in situations where he hasn't as much control as usual. Part One is particularly good for this – like *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, something terrible's happened and he's not been around to stop it. Worse, when he does turn up, he's not even recognised or respected. It's also why the chase episode, with the Doctor on the run, works better than the one in *Planet of the Spiders*.

INVASION OF THE DINOSAURS IS THE PACIEST SCRIPT OF SEASON ELEVEN

But I'm getting off the point, which is that, despite all the story's good things, the sheer, rubbery, eye-catching badness of the dinosaurs always gets in the way. Which is a Stegosaurus-sized shame, because *Invasion of the Dinosaurs* isn't really a Season Eleven 'past its peak' Pertwee story at all, but actually a very late Season Seven one – and everybody loves those, don't they? As I've said, there's Pertwee's better performance. In fact, there's something of the 'Tom Bakers' about Pertwee's last year and a bit, where he seemed to rediscover some of the old magic – or, at least, there's a marked reduction in the unattractive arrogance his portrayal had slipped into. Then there's Charles Grover MP, who's a whole Whitehall mile more convincing than the era's usual bureaucratic buffoons. And that's another Season Seven thing – the type of villainy on display. The scientists behind Operation Golden Age aren't evil, just misguided and, well, a bit loopy. Mostly, though, it's the story's scope that has most in common with Season Seven – going beyond just the immediate concerns of its characters. Eight million people have been evacuated out of London; we're not just told about the move but shown it via Paddy Russell's evocative shots of the city's deserted streets. Despite the Brigadier's boast that the evacuation went off without a hitch, there's the distinct feeling that people have died, and died horribly. Part One is just about perfect anyway, and the only disappointment – dinosaurs aside – is that the others don't sustain its sense of lawlessness, with its looters and mention of detention camps.

So there you are – *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*, the last complete story to be released on video. In the words of Fatboy Slim, "We've come a long, long way together" – 20 years, to be precise, as long as the programme had been on air when the first release, *Revenge of the Cybermen*, arrived back in 1983, minus its episode endings. No doubt it'll take nearly as long to do it all again on disc. DVD has made VHS look prehistoric, so *Dinosaurs* is an appropriate final release – last, but not least.

a charred corpse in wartime London. It's an effective enough story, although the Doctor's failure to provide even a vague rationalisation doesn't sit well with his first incarnation's healthy scepticism. Likewise, *Long Term*, with its eerily empty school, exploding children, and open-ended conclusion, and the final note of unending horror in *The Discourse of Flies*, are both satisfyingly repellent.

Terror is much more difficult. The only story that even comes close is the genteel nastiness of Robert Shearman's *The Death of Me*, which sees the Sixth Doctor trapped in a house with a charming middle-aged couple, all being slain at the same time each day by an army of themselves. What's particularly disturbing is not the cycle of death, but the suggestion that the uncertainties of life are more unbearable. *Mire and Clay* by Gareth Wigmore, set in 1840s Afghanistan, is very much in the style of Kipling's tales of native brutality. Ian is forced to participate in a fight to the death over a seething pit of horrors. Wigmore captures the prose style of the Victorian horror story well. Tara Samms' *Face-Painter* is deeply unsettling, not particularly because of the unexplained affliction that has caused the Doctor, Jamie and Victoria to lose their faces, but in its wider theme of the facelessness of the underprivileged individual. Equally spine-chilling is the Roald Dahl twist in the tail of Jonathan Morris' macabre and clever *Mauritz*, which places the Fourth Doctor and Adric in a mysterious citadel.

The Comet's Tail explores the Fifth Doctor's feelings of powerlessness, his passivity and his lack of understanding, summing up all his fears in a neatly-written tale that sees him, once again, become a slave to events. *Soul Mate* does something similar for Tegan, having her encounter the ghost of a shipwrecked colonist who sees Tegan as a reflection of herself. Mysterious reflections and sinister mirrors recur throughout the collection, from the first story, Lance Parkin's interesting but distinctly un-scary *The Exiles* in which Susan encounters an echo of the past through a mirror in the TARDIS, to Huw Wilkin's Eighth Doctor tale *Gazing Void*, in which the Doctor faces a dictator whom he helped overthrow, and finds staring into the abyss rather too uncomfortable.

Some of the stories fall flat: *Losing Track of Time* might have made for an effective sequence in a TV episode, but it lacks something on the page. *The Fear* is a slight story featuring an alien that wants to subject the Fourth Doctor to neverending terror. Marc Platt's anaemic Sixth Doctor tale *Whiskey and Water* fails to recreate the atmosphere of *Ghost Light* or *Loups-Garoux*. Meanwhile, *This is My Life*, a dreadful 'poem' about the Seventh Doctor's adventures, seems to have been included merely so that all eight incarnations are represented.

There's only one problem with *A Universe of Terrors* – and it's a pretty fundamental one – none of the stories is particularly terrifying. If, like this reviewer, you were hoping for a nightmare-inducing collection of tales in the vein of the Pan Books of Horror, you'll probably be mildly disappointed. However, for those merely in search of a solid, readable anthology, *A Universe of Terrors* will hit the spot.

MATT MICHAEL

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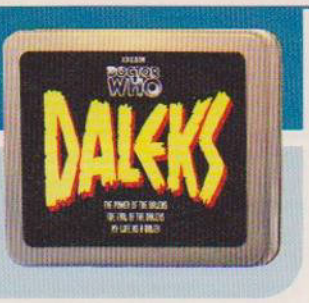
There was a documentary series on television recently called *In Search of Shakespeare*. Its point was that although we have the work, we know almost nothing about the man behind it, which got me thinking about Patrick Troughton, and how, in his case, we haven't even got much of the work. Troughton footage is *Doctor Who*'s rarest commodity, and recorded interviews with its most publicity-shy star its second.

Well, actually, that's probably not quite true. What the archives are really missing is a good old face-to-face interview with Bill Hartnell. Troughton, at least, has appearances on *Pebble Mill*, *Breakfast Time* and *Nationwide* to his name – the Beeb hasn't even got poor old Billy's *Desert Island Discs* any more. Even so, rightly or wrongly, we feel we know Hartnell. As many people have spoken for him as against him and, of course, we've had a biography. Hartnell comes to us as a fascinating and controversial personality, with strong views about people and *Doctor Who*. By comparison, Troughton is an enigma. That he was a great actor and a nice bloke isn't in doubt, but the truth is, we know next to nothing about Troughton's opinions – what he thought of his three producers, or his writers, for example. Think about this for a moment – what is Troughton's favourite story? To have watched or to have worked on? This, in any other circumstance, achingly dull question is asked of Troughton on one of the many PBS interviews that make up Reeltime's *Patrick Troughton in America*, and I was struck by the fact I had absolutely no idea what he was going to say. He picks *The Mind Robber*, by the way, praising its "unnerving quality". Sadly that's about your lot for the show as we got it. As usual, there seems more on Troughton's early reluctance to accept the part, and the costume ideas that never made it. On the other hand, in another interview for Station KTEH, Troughton goes into some detail about the acting business in general, and his old fear of typecasting. This fear, returned to again and again on the disc, can seem a bit obsessive, particularly today when success in a long-running series or soap seems to be what a TV career is all about. Typecasting is also the reason he gives for attending American conventions over those at home. Of course, it's one of those ghastly coincidences that after fearing *Doctor Who* might kill off his niche as a character actor, Troughton should die attending an American convention. The very last pictures of Troughton at that event are included here, and as is sometimes the way of these things, the footage has taken on some extra significance. Shot on camcorder, not only can we see the date in the bottom left-hand corner, but also the minutes relentlessly ticking by ..

VANESSA BISHOP

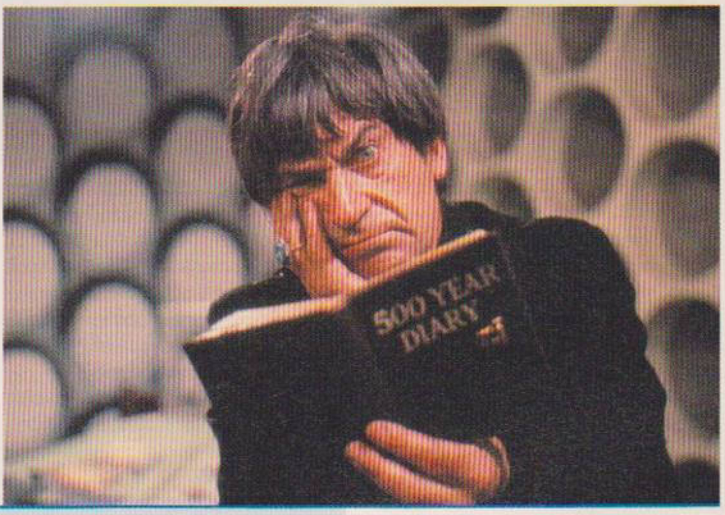
DOCTOR WHO: **DALEKS**

(CONTAINS **THE POWER OF THE DALEKS** AND **THE EVIL OF THE DALEKS**)



CD TIN SET BBC RADIO COLLECTION
AUTHOR DAVID WHITAKER
RRP £29.99
REVIEWER VANESSA BISHOP

This CD box set of *The Power of the Daleks* and *The Evil of the Daleks* also includes the entertaining documentary *My Life as a Dalek* – but as its broadcast has been reviewed recently [see **DWM** 329], I'm going to stick with David Whitaker's two stories. Okay, let's get this out of the way right at the start too. I really like *The Evil of the Daleks*. I think I always did, even before I knew what it was about. It was the title – it's so enigmatic, nebulously multi-purpose and, well, *evil*. All Dalek stories should've been called *The Evil of the Daleks*, and most would've been better for it – "Skaro, and the Daleks are digging for something ... find out what, Saturday, 6.15, in *The Evil of the Daleks*." Yes, I like *Evil*, but I like *The Power of the Daleks* a lot more. Now, that's hardly the greatest *Doctor Who* faux pas, and it's not as 'throw away the key' bonkers as saying *The Chase* is better than *Master Plan*, or voting for *The Web Planet* in the **DWM** DVD Poll (you know who you are), but I recognise it's not the natural order of things. In the last major **DWM** survey of stories, *Evil* came 9th and *Power* 18th. Not much in it, but where *Evil* is talked about as a 'classic', *Power* gets rather limp stuff like 'a good start to the Troughton era'. Correction: *Power* is a *fantastic* start for a new Doctor – in fact, the best. Its closest rival, chronologically as well as artistically, is *Spearhead from Space*, and where that's flashy and filmic and special in its own way, *Power* is sinister – not now and again, or just at the cliff-hangers, but all the way through. Right now, I can't think of anything more sinister than a Dalek chanting "I am your ser-vant ..." except perhaps for Lesterson repeating the phrase at the end of the story, his mind broken after seeing the Dalek production line.



THE NEW NARRATION ON **POWER** AND **EVIL** IS A VAST IMPROVEMENT

The best – and in its dark way, the funniest – thing about the Daleks pretending to be servants, is that they don't even try to sound like they mean it. In fact, *Power* reveals the Daleks to be the most appalling and amateur of actors, seemingly unable to hold a conversation without almost giving the game away. Of course, it's not just the Daleks who are pretending to be something they're not, but also the new Doctor – and it brings out the best in him too. Impersonating the Earth Examiner gets Troughton into the story straight away, without the navel-gazing that slows up most regenerations.

Another reason why I prefer *Power* is that it seems to unfold more naturally. *Evil*, on the other hand, seems quite contrived. Somehow, the Daleks conceiving a plan where the Doctor and his TARDIS are a vital part just doesn't seem to make a lot of sense, and its elaborate traps and coincidences can make it feel messy, and a little bit Eric Saward-ish. That's a good and bad thing for me – I love *Revelation* but not *Resurrection*, and when the Emperor Dalek booms out that the Doctor will "take the Dalek Factor and spread it through the history of Earth," things seem to be moving in the direction of the latter. *Evil* also has some future echoes of *Destiny of the Daleks* – for the Human Factor, read their later search for intuition. Which brings me to something that's nagged me for a while. Yes, there's a lot of Terry Nation in David Whitaker's scripts; both give static and mercury as the explanation to, well, just about everything. But there's also a lot of Whitaker in later Terry Nation. Nation, as we know, didn't really like Whitaker's scripts, for the pretty flimsy reason that he thought the Daleks were bland. Nevertheless, there's a good half dozen scenes in *Power* that play like some of the key moments in *Genesis*, particularly around Lesterson's reanimation of the creatures – it even has a low-rent version of its production line sequence.

Experiencing the stories as soundtracks, it's obviously *Evil* that misses its pictures most. We quickly get a feel for *Power*'s sterile future society because we know its type so well. It's only with the TARDIS-like dimensions of the Dalek capsule where it feels we aren't getting enough information, and principally that's Whitaker's fault for not giving Lesterson, or Ben, or Polly, a line that at least suggests they're a little bit surprised by this. Overall, though, audio plays up to *Power*'s claustrophobic qualities, whereas *Evil* feels marginally reduced by it. It's not the big, spectacular set-pieces that suffer – in fact, it's rather easy to over-embellish its Skaro episodes and the whole 'final end' battle. What we don't get quite so vividly is its Victorian grandeur. It just so happens that a Dalek's been put in the window of an auction house near where I live. It stands there next to, amongst other things, a big old grandfather clock, and every fan that sees it says it looks like *Evil of the Daleks* – but, of course, it would be repetitive and wrong to expect *Evil*'s narration to constantly refer to the bizarre juxtaposition of images that make that window display so bewitching.

It goes without saying that the new narration on both stories is much better than the Tom Baker material used on the cassette releases back in the early 1990s – it goes without saying because it couldn't really be much worse! *Power* was the worst offender, a wholly unsympathetic mess of Tom talking in the first person and narration author Eric Saward at his most self-indulgent. It's a real pleasure, then, to hear its historic first episode handled properly. Sue Cowley's linking script gives Anneke Wills three times what Baker had to say, yet it never feels overbearing or intrusive. It is, in fact – along with the use of much better recordings – a marvellous piece of restoration, and the equal of anything that's happening on DVD. The same goes for Frazer Hines' new commentary on *Evil*, although I'm not sure the reinstatement of the Tricolour coffee bar counts as restoration – it's more like an alternative scene with no option to listen to the original, but Mark Ayres' very clever, no doubt complicated, switch of The Beatles' *Paperback Writer* for a Dave Clarke Five track has probably saved this set from a massive price tag, so fair enough. And besides, *Hold Tight* and the already present *Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen* by The Seekers seem like pretty appropriate anthems for *Evil*. **DWM**

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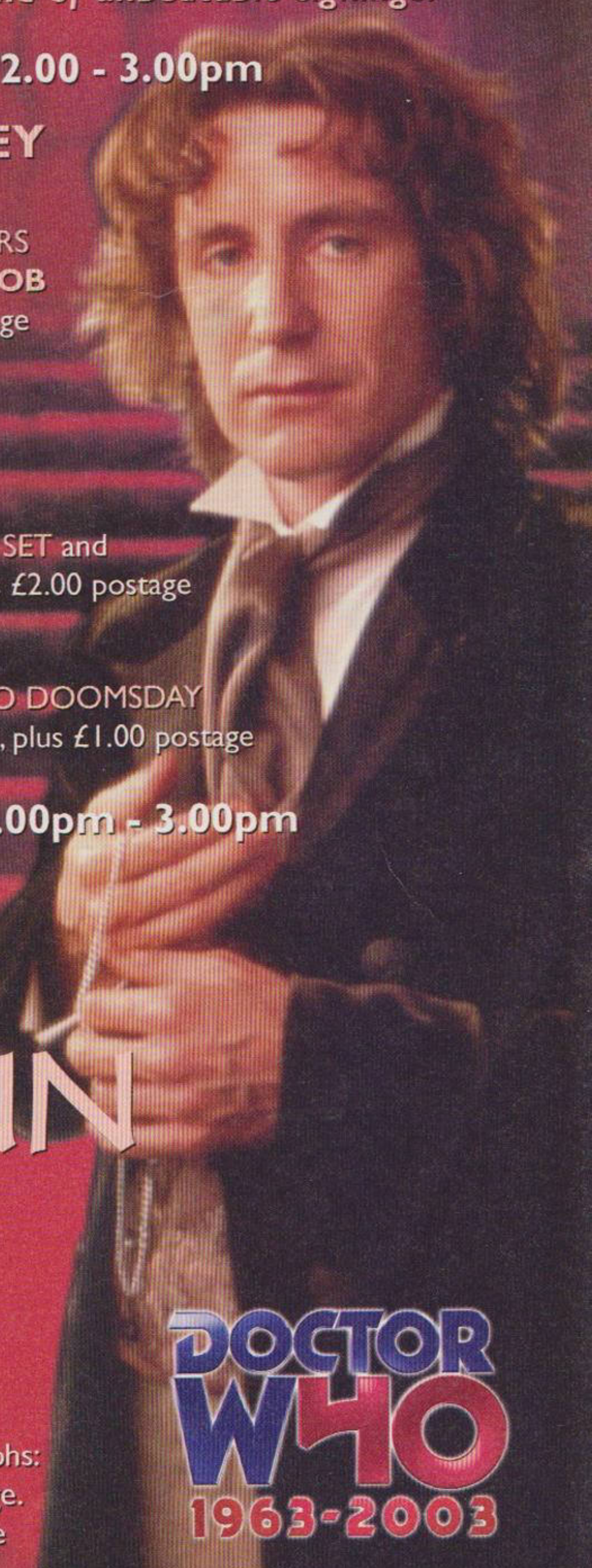

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IT'S THE END, BUT...

BY THE WATCHER

Robert Holmes was a clever chap, wasn't he? Not only did he write lovely *Doctor Who* stories, but he made a point of confronting the various absurdities inherent in the format, and magically shaking some sort of sense into them. The 'alternative future' scene in *Pyramids of Mars* addresses the question of why the Doctor doesn't just clear off in the historical stories. The 'telepathic gift' that translates alien languages into English, introduced by Holmes to *The Masque of Mandragora*, explains why nobody in San Martino appears to speak Italian. As explanations go, it's only just convincing enough to pass muster, but Holmes knew this, which is why he deliberately pulled the rug from under it in *The Two Doctors* ("I don't speak Spanish!" complains Peri when asked to distract the Androgums at the Hacienda. "That's all right, neither do they," counters the Doctor).

An amusing tradition, which pre-dates *The Masque of Mandragora* by many years, is that the Doctor's telepathic gift not only translates other characters' speech into English, but also reflects their social status in the choice of accent it gives them. Working-class soldiers spout Cockney vowels not only at UNIT HQ, but also in the Renaissance Italy of *City of Death* and the Gallifrey of *The Five Doctors*. Interestingly, the Doctor's telepathic gift favours London accents in nearly every urban or industrialised society he visits (note the proliferation of Cockney wide-boys on Varos, Frontios and Iceworld), but whenever he finds himself on an rustic, agricultural planet, the cosmic accents suddenly go all west-country on us – witness the straw-chewing, cider-drinking, mutton-broth-quaffing oo-arr peasants in *Planet of the Spiders* and *State of Decay*.

OO-ARR!

'Oo-arr'. Now if ever a phrase were indelibly etched on the soul of one particular *Doctor Who* character, then surely it's 'Oo-arr', an utterance forever yoked in our collective imagination to the colourful, well-acted and wholly unfathomable character of Pigbin Josh, the tragic duffel-coated village idiot whose halcyon days of harmless and inexplicable bicycle-related mayhem are brought to a premature end one day when he is unfortunate enough to have his brains sucked out through a straw by the alien parasite Axos. Even before this notable setback, his vocabulary consists solely of the phrase 'Oo-arr', which is sufficient reason to consider him the paragon of a particular kind of *Doctor Who* character, a crucial mainstay of the show from its earliest days. This all-important archetype, hereinafter referred to as the 'Pigbin', is easily spotted in any number of stories – he's the local yokel, the bucolic poacher/farmer/git who is surprised/bemused/eaten by something nasty in his woodshed/cottage/wellingtons, and whose poor distraught wife has to suffer the terrible consequences of his poaching/farming/gittishness. Sam Seeley. Mr Ollis. Farmer Squire, killed instantly when slapped in the face by a Silurian. Pigbins, the lot of them. But here's the really interesting thing: without fail the Pigbin is always, *always* from the southwest of England – even when the story isn't set there.

Consider this for a moment. Axos, as we're told repeatedly by Corporal Bell, touches down on the South-East coast. So what's a comedy Cornishman like Pigbin Josh doing there? The meteorites in *Spearhead from Space* land in Essex: "Oo-arr, ain't nothing so tasty as a fresh rabbit, bit of salt and a few onions, arr!" *Doctor Who and the Silurians* is set in Derbyshire: "Doris! There's something in moy barrrrn! Oo-arr!" *The Time Monster* is set in Cambridgeshire: "It were just about 'ere where that doodlebug fell – back in 1944 that were, arr!" *The Sea Devils* is set in the Solent: "Arr, it's true, three ships vanished, something queer going on, arr."

The correct term for this sort of thing is 'Mummerset', the theatrical jargon for an all-purpose west-country accent. This, incidentally, is what Sarah-Jane means when she says that the meditation centre in *Planet of the Spiders* is located "in darkest Mummerset" – it's a joke, not a reference to a fictional county, whatever some reference books might think. Interestingly the location footage makes it abundantly clear that the railway station is in fact Mortimer, just south of Reading – hardly Pigbin country. (Except that, this being *Doctor Who*, the arrival of Tommy soon demonstrates that a Pigbin is never far away.)

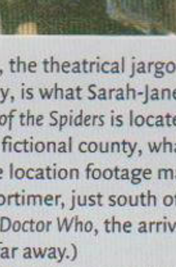
The Pigbin is by no means restricted to the Pertwee era. He dates as far back as *The Dalek Invasion of Earth*, in which Mr Wells, possibly named after his home town, oo-arrs his way to victory against the Daleks. Latter-day Pigbins include the Fang Rock lighthousemen and the Poacher from *The Visitation* who, despite inhabiting Heathrow, favours the strangulated John-Barleycorn-meets-Kermit-the-Frog Mummerset so beloved of Morris dancers and members of Steeleye Span: "Kill them, scytheman, and you doy too, moy dear, arr, oo-arr!".

Remarkably few *Doctor Who* stories are actually set in the south-west. *The Dæmons* and *K9 and Company* barely qualify, being set in Wiltshire and Gloucestershire respectively (maximum Pigbin Points to the Devil's End denizen who cries "Ye said yerself it'd be syui-soide!"). *The Time Warrior* unfolds in the demesne of Sir Edward of Wessex, so the Pigbinisms of Bloodaxe and co are justified. *The Stones of Blood* is set in Cornwall, but funnily enough there isn't a single Pigbin to be heard. Similarly, despite the Dorset location, nearly everyone in *The Awakening* speaks RP, leaving Will Chandler as just about the only one to give it a bit of the old 'Oo-arr'. Add *The Smugglers* and *Image of the Fendahl* (a story which demonstrates conclusively that a lady Pigbin can be every bit as devastating as her male counterparts), and that's about it.

So what are we to make of this vaguely diverting phenomenon? It's my theory that, approximately 102,003 years ago, there existed an unsuccessful and hitherto unknown hominid called *homo pigbinus*. Selected by pitiless Mother Nature for extinction, the remnants of this hopeless tribe were inadvertently rescued from the Darwinian chopping-block by an old man, two schoolteachers and a screeching harpy, who blundered into their cave one day and showed them the secret of fire. Ever since then, the wretched descendants of this futile evolutionary cul-de-sac have been forced to eke out a pathetic existence as farmers, poachers and gits, condemned forever to second-class citizenship by their unconvincingly-accented buffoonery.

It's as good a theory as any.

THE FINAL TEST



WHAT CONNECTS:

1. The opening episodes of *The Mind Robber* and *Frontios*?
2. The governing colonists, an Uxariean leader, the Minotaur, the military Vogans, and the forces of universal equilibrium?
3. *The Evil of the Daleks*, *Spearhead from Space*, *Revelation of the Daleks*, and *Remembrance of the Daleks*?
4. Professor Hayter, the Castellan, the Rani, and Commodore Travers [pictured]?
5. *Logopolis*, *Arc of Infinity*, and *The Awakening*?
6. Buller, Torvin, Oscar, Kara, and Karra?

ANSWERS FROM LAST ISSUE:

1. All killed by the Master's Tissue Compression Eliminator
2. All called Williams (*The Tenth Planet*; *Inferno*; *Frontier in Space*)
3. All had android doubles (in, variously, *The Chase*, *The Android Invasion*, *The Androids of Tara* and *The Caves of Androzani*)
4. All have the same names as planets (*Lobos*; *Peladon*; *Sarn*)
5. Credited differently in early episodes and/or *Radio Times* to conceal their true identities ('A Stranger' in *The Mind Robber*; 'The Unknown' in *Black Orchid*; 'Renegade' in *Arc of Infinity*; 'Alien' in *Radio Times* for *The Seeds of Death* Episode One; and 'Leader' and 'Lieutenant' in *Radio Times* for *Earthshock* Parts One and Two)
6. The actors who played them (Haydn Jones, Michael Wisher, Pamela Salem, Rob Edwards, Stuart Blake, Leslie Meadows) also played a credited role in the immediately preceding story

(And for anyone still wondering, here are those Babel Fish translations from last month. Burglar Of Heart = *The Mind Robber*. Those Which Are Less Than The Surface = *The Faceless Ones*. Kind Of Destiny = *The Seeds of Doom*. Now Me It Is, The Person Of The Snow = *The Abominable Snowmen*. Thing Planet = *Planet of the Spiders*. Apologizing Meat Festival Of Monster = *Carnival of Monsters*. Surface Of Badness = *The Face of Evil*. Inside Space Organization = *The Wheel in Space*. Month Foundation = *The Moonbase*. It Dies Important Matter = *The Ambassadors of Death*. Inside Head Of A Family Company One Show = *The Greatest Show in the Galaxy*. And finally: Invasion Of Presentation Times Green Onion Insect Type = *Invasion of the Dinosaurs*. Don't ask me ...)

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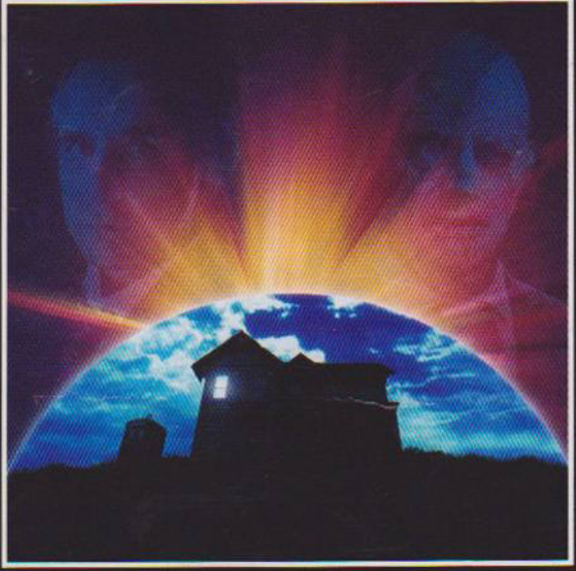

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